CARBUSTERS

JOURNAL OF THE CARFREE MOVEMENT #37 / FEB 2009 - APR 2009

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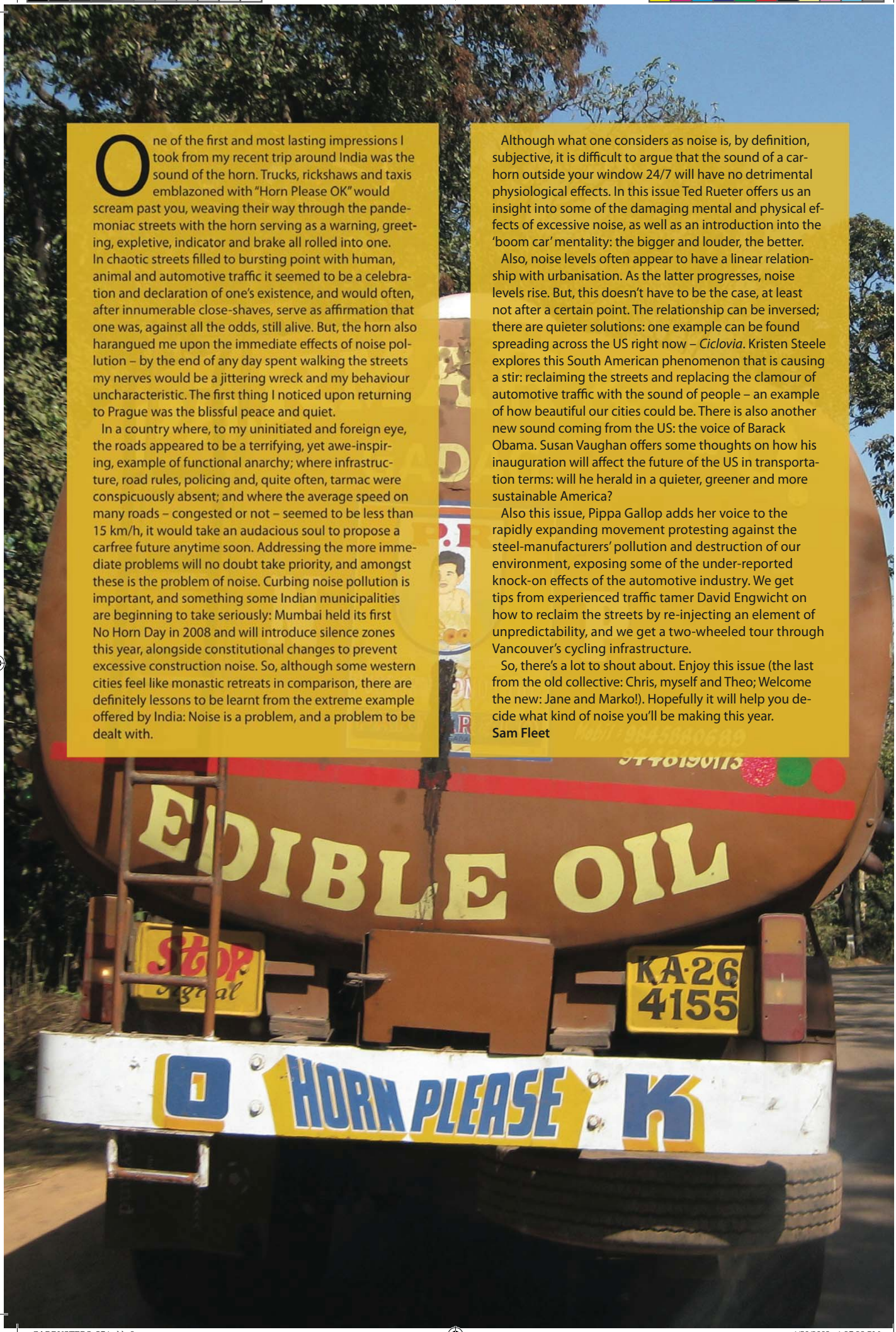

One of the first and most lasting impressions I took from my recent trip around India was the sound of the horn. Trucks, rickshaws and taxis emblazoned with "Horn Please OK" would scream past you, weaving their way through the pandemoniac streets with the horn serving as a warning, greeting, expletive, indicator and brake all rolled into one. In chaotic streets filled to bursting point with human, animal and automotive traffic it seemed to be a celebration and declaration of one's existence, and would often, after innumerable close-shaves, serve as affirmation that one was, against all the odds, still alive. But, the horn also harangued me upon the immediate effects of noise pollution – by the end of any day spent walking the streets my nerves would be a jittering wreck and my behaviour uncharacteristic. The first thing I noticed upon returning to Prague was the blissful peace and quiet.

In a country where, to my uninitiated and foreign eye, the roads appeared to be a terrifying, yet awe-inspiring, example of functional anarchy; where infrastructure, road rules, policing and, quite often, tarmac were conspicuously absent; and where the average speed on many roads – congested or not – seemed to be less than 15 km/h, it would take an audacious soul to propose a carfree future anytime soon. Addressing the more immediate problems will no doubt take priority, and amongst these is the problem of noise. Curbing noise pollution is important, and something some Indian municipalities are beginning to take seriously: Mumbai held its first No Horn Day in 2008 and will introduce silence zones this year, alongside constitutional changes to prevent excessive construction noise. So, although some western cities feel like monastic retreats in comparison, there are definitely lessons to be learnt from the extreme example offered by India: Noise is a problem, and a problem to be dealt with.

Although what one considers as noise is, by definition, subjective, it is difficult to argue that the sound of a car-horn outside your window 24/7 will have no detrimental physiological effects. In this issue Ted Rueter offers us an insight into some of the damaging mental and physical effects of excessive noise, as well as an introduction into the 'boom car' mentality: the bigger and louder, the better.

Also, noise levels often appear to have a linear relationship with urbanisation. As the latter progresses, noise levels rise. But, this doesn't have to be the case, at least not after a certain point. The relationship can be inversed; there are quieter solutions: one example can be found spreading across the US right now – *Ciclovia*. Kristen Steele explores this South American phenomenon that is causing a stir: reclaiming the streets and replacing the clamour of automotive traffic with the sound of people – an example of how beautiful our cities could be. There is also another new sound coming from the US: the voice of Barack Obama. Susan Vaughan offers some thoughts on how his inauguration will affect the future of the US in transportation terms: will he herald in a quieter, greener and more sustainable America?

Also this issue, Pippa Gallop adds her voice to the rapidly expanding movement protesting against the steel-manufacturers' pollution and destruction of our environment, exposing some of the under-reported knock-on effects of the automotive industry. We get tips from experienced traffic tamer David Engwicht on how to reclaim the streets by re-injecting an element of unpredictability, and we get a two-wheeled tour through Vancouver's cycling infrastructure.

So, there's a lot to shout about. Enjoy this issue (the last from the old collective: Chris, myself and Theo; Welcome the new: Jane and Marko!). Hopefully it will help you decide what kind of noise you'll be making this year.

Sam Fleet

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Education and Culture DG
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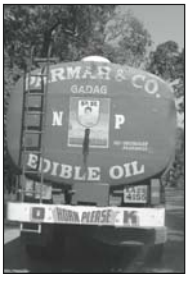

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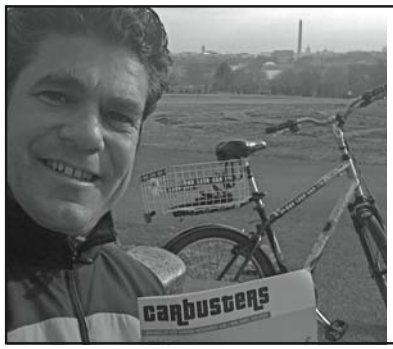
Letters



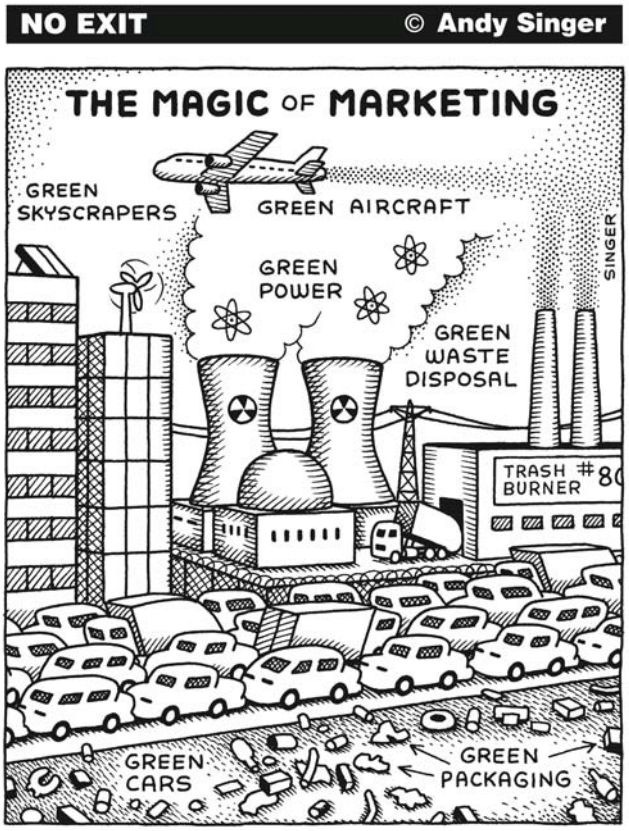
Carbusters goes to Obama's inauguration in DC on January 20. It's a cold day but it's sunny and the streets are full of excited pedestrians and bikes – on streets that are closed to cars today.
Thanks for promoting the carfree lifestyle.

Jim Reid, Arlington, Virginia

Dear *Carbusters*,
Thanks SO MUCH for featuring the B:C:Clettes in your last issue (#36 and thanks Nate Padavick for the great cover artwork). There is a growing international bike dance/performance movement, which started here in the Pacific Northwest (Portland, Oregon to be exact). In November 2008 an International Bike Performance Symposium was held outside of Seattle, Washington which brought together 25 people from six different groups to skill share, bond and dance! I want to give a shout out to all the other inspiring groups not mentioned in last month's article. Look them up online:
Canada: Brakes, Vancouver; VeloVixens, Victoria; US: Bicycle Belles, Seattle; The Sprockettes, Portland (*The originals*); Chain Reaction, Portland; The Bottom Brackettes, Eugene; The Derailleurs, San Francisco; UK: The Spokes, Manchester; Bicycle Ballet, Brighton/London.
If there are more out there, let us know. Yeah to bikes for bringing us all together!
Cara Fisher
B:C:Clettes, Vancouver BC
www.bcclettes.ca
bcclettes@gmail.com

Matt Nickels: ***Carbusters* hits Whistler's slopes**

Dear *Carbusters*,
I consider it neither surprising nor alarming that the American government should consider becoming a stakeholder in the auto industry. Year after year, cars kill far more people than the US military. Washington already possesses the world's greatest arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, so why not add a few car companies to the portfolio.
Thomas J. DeMarco,
Whistler, Canada



Messenger Blues
I sit here relaxing on my bed
I'm 57 and I'm getting old.
Outside its so damn cold.
I sit here relaxing on my bed:
My bikes in the hallway,
heavy as a piece of lead;
man, I wish I was fucking dead!
Messenger Blues, Messenger Blues, I definitely got the Blues!
Eugene Carrington, New York

Contributors

Jonas Christian, 30, lives in Kreuzberg, Germany and has a Master's in Engineering as well as a tiny Internet company. He enjoys blogging about carfree topics and riding his Xtracycle.

Christa Clark-Jones has been happily carfree for one year. She is founder of **CarFreeLifestyle.com**, a user-generated website for carfree enthusiasts. Check out her new blog **shoesonmybike.wordpress.com**

Joshua Hart recently completed research on the social and quality of life impacts of motor vehicle traffic, covered in the last issue of *Carbusters*. His study received international coverage, including in *the Guardian, the Tehran Times* and *Bangalore Daily*.
Read his blog **onthelevelblog.com**

Chris Keam is a Vancouver writer focusing on cycling, the bike industry and sustainability issues. You can read his blog, past articles, or contact him by visiting **www.chriskeam.com**

Terry Lowe has been carfree all his life. Secretly he wishes he could fly, but lacking that, thinks a bike is the next best thing. He works for *Momentum Magazine*.

Nate Padavick is an illustrator who currently lives in Columbus, Ohio and enjoys spending time in cities that actually have bike lanes.
www.studiosss.com/pdx.html

Luis Patricio and his wife are carfree citizens who have a nice living room in their house-garage. **www.transportehumano.com.br**

Ted Rueter is director of Noise Free America, a national citizens' organisation opposed to noise pollution. **www.noisefree.org**

Kristen Steele is a San Francisco-based writer and activist. She works for Thunderhead Alliance, the North American coalition of bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organisations.
www.thunderheadalliance.org

Jim Swanson is the co-founder of Critical Mass and a San Francisco-based artist. See more of his work at **www.heckleandjive.com**

Susan Vaughan is a sustainable transportation activist and blogger based in San Francisco, California. She committed herself to the carfree life in 1990 for reasons that need no explanation.

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world carfree network

World Carfree Network brings together organisations and individuals dedicated to promoting alternatives to car dependence. Member Group Profile outlines the history, latest projects and carfree activities from one of our members.

By Luis Patricio

Bicicletada Curitiba

Bicicletada Curitiba's roots can be traced back to a small gathering of cyclists in Curitiba, a city in the southern state of Paraná, Brazil who shared the same philosophy: the right to claim more space and respect on the streets, where cars have come to dominate. The small group of cycling enthusiasts has grown over time and attracts all kinds of people with one common interest: to create a better place to live.

Initially only a small number of simple initiatives and individual events took place, such as distributing information flyers and submitting formal complaints in order to raise awareness of the bicycle as a sustainable means of transport. Now, one of the events which characterises Bicicletada Curitiba is their monthly bike ride, consisting of more than 100 participants. The ride has become a central meeting point for environmental organisations, artistic groups, academics, architects and individuals who wish to exchange their ideas and experiences about urban mobility and sustainable living.

The organisation also recognises the importance of online social networking as a way to inform and bring about change: not only at the local and national levels by creating an online blog and forum, but internationally – becoming a member organisation of the World Carfree Network in 2008. In particular, this move into social networking through an online blog and forum has become a useful source for sharing information, as well as an essential tool for activists to organise direct actions, share ideas, and to assist the planning and coordination of more elaborate events. Recent additions to these online services are the Curitiba Cycle Map and a Cycle Guide indicating routes and bike-friendly places – especially helpful tools for avid cyclists and those new to the cycling scene.

Cycling in Curitiba is not for the faint-hearted: not only is it difficult and dangerous to get around by bike, but – worse – the city does not provide any bicycle parking in the downtown area. Although many measures have been taken by the government to improve transportation, not all are effective in practice. For example, Curitiba was allocated approximately US$100 million in 2008 to build a new transit system. Part of this money was invested to upgrade the public transportation system, but the largest part was invested in car infrastructure. Curitiba doesn't have even a single kilometre of bike lane, while not one new exclusive bike path has been built since the 80s.

Recognising this as a problem that deters people from using bicycles, Bicicletada Curitiba seek to remedy this issue with the establishment of Bike-Friendly Business: a project focusing on converting areas of existing car parking lots into bike parking. The message caught on: soon many businesses (restaurants, markets etc.) were advocating for bike parking to be built in their areas, seeing the potential economic and social benefits from increasing customer visits and supporting sustainable mobility. As a result of projects like this, the bicycle scene in Curitiba is growing at an enormous rate.

Bicicletada Curitiba has many activities taking place year-round. Some of the most notable events are Park(ing) Days, Bike Blessings and behavioural studies' analyses in cooperation with the Universidade Federal do Paraná. In all of them, decentralisation is always one of the prominent aspects.

Projects are executed with the help of a dedicated volunteer staff. The Carfree Month held in September 2008 is a good example of how this works (see *Carbusters* #36). During Carfree Month, the most popular and media attention-grabbing activity was Bike Lane Painting. The idea came from a group of activists, supported by local residents in the Alto da Glória neighbourhood of Curitiba, who were tired of the insecurity and lack of space allocated to those who don't own a car, as well as the indifference to their needs from the government. Ironically, the group trying to create a less polluted environment were fined for "environmental crime", and the government, which has never constructed a single bike lane in Curitiba, erased the first.

Another significant event during Carfree Month was the Commuters' Challenge: gaining substantial coverage in local media, which followed each contestant. Interestingly, the motorcyclist was the fastest, the cyclist a close second, being one of the cheapest and cleanest commuters, and the car was found to be the slowest.

Following a huge spark of interest from the media as a result of Bicicletada Curitiba's actions during Carfree Month, it became impossible to ignore the group. They have been involved in meetings with municipal representatives and gained stronger acknowledgment from authorities, as well as from the general public. Additionally, they now participate in national conferences and debates at Curitiba City Council meetings on issues regarding sustainable transportation.

Consequently, Bicicletada Curitiba is one of the most effective Brazilian actors to encourage and support anyone willing to let go of the car, promoting direct transformation at a smaller (but human) scale.

For more information, please visit, www.bicicletadacuritiba.org

Reclaiming the streets © **Bicicletada Curitiba**

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My Flatmate's a Car

The area of Kreuzberg in Berlin is definitely an experimental part of the German capital. You may know already that many people commute there every day using public transport or bikes, but what you might not know is that in the same district some people choose to bring their cars up into their homes. This bizarre habit was made possible by the construction of 'Carlofts' that allow inhabitants to bring their car, using an elevator in the garage, to the same level of their flat. Already seven of the 11 units available have found owners, and the developer is already planning to promote the idea in other German cities. It's good to know that in this cold winter people are finally taking more consideration for those poor cars sleeping outside...

www.thelocal.de

Obama's Rolling Bunker

The new president of the United States received a new car for his inaugural parade down Pennsylvania Avenue on January 20. Barack Obama followed the tradition of using bulletproof cars established by Lyndon Johnson after the murder of JF Kennedy. General Motors' spokeswoman Joanne Krell stated that, "Cadillac is honoured to serve and renew this great tradition. It is entirely appropriate that an American president has at his service a great American vehicle."

A great American vehicle also means great security, great size, great price and of course a great consumption of oil. As the website Truck Trend notes, "It probably guzzles more gas in a week than most people use in a month." The car looks like an armoured vehicle with doors nearly 20 cm deep, and thick, fixed windows. The candidate of change inaugurates a new kind of hybrid vehicle: a mix of car, truck and tank…

www.cnn.com

Give Praise to Lord GM

Who said that cars are just the product of a technical and industrial process? Cars obviously also have a spiritual dimension. At least, this is the conviction of the Greater Grace Temple in Detroit, where a celebration took place last December to pray for the future of cars and for the adoption of the bailout plan for auto-manufacturers.

Imagine: a whole church praying with a gospel choir, sharing the stage with three SUVs and the Pentecostal Bishop Charles H. Ellis III – who entitled his sermon "A Hybrid Hope". Representatives of the church and General Motors prayed hand in hand to call for a rebirth of the auto industry. As the United Auto Workers vice president for Chrysler said, "We have done all that we can do in this union, so I turn it over to the Lord."

The faith in cars even transcends the gap between old religions – the cardinal Adam Maida from the Roman Catholic Church gathered 11 Detroit-based religious leaders, representing Christian, Jewish and Muslim congregations, to ask Congress to approve the multi-billion dollar plan advocated by automakers. It seems cars have become the greatest manifestation of modernity's intrinsic faith in technology.

www.nytimes.com

Buy a House and Get a Car

Jill Schisler from Canton, China found a new way to sell her house. After nine months of searching unsuccessfully for a buyer for the house, which is listed at US$84,900, she decided to include her SUV as part of the deal. She put a sign on the car that read, "Free SUV with purchase of house". It seems this was a good idea: "I've had tons of calls since I put the sign up" Schisler said. She even received some calls from people interested in the car but not the house. Maybe she should offer a free house with the car?

www.pjstar.com

A Carfree Grand Prix?

It is fashionable nowadays to cover every event you want to promote with a dash of green paint. A carfree Grand Prix sounds as paradoxical as a green car, but this didn't seem to shock the organisers of the British Grand Prix set to take place in Donington in 2010. They are planning to bring spectators by public transport and want therefore to call it a "Carfree Grand Prix" – maybe fans didn't manage to reach the circuit last time due to traffic jams… We can thank them for the nice gesture, and hope that next time they attend the Grand Prix they'll realise what it's all about: a show where a few cars using an incredible amount of precious energy go around in circles for a few hours.

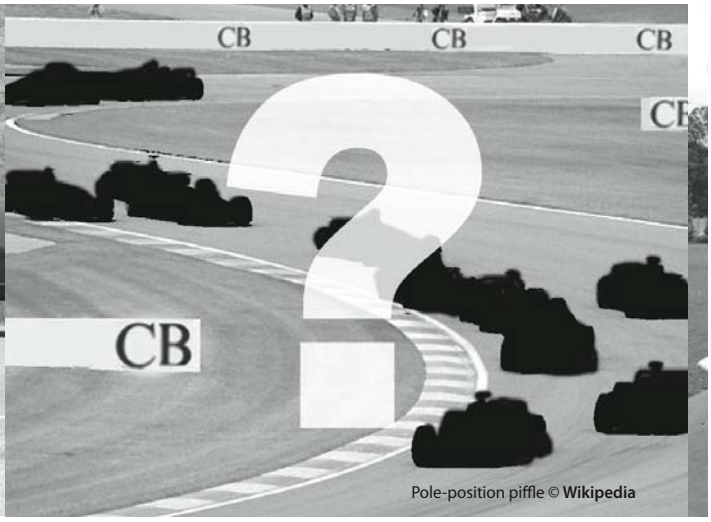
www.setanta.com

Fat Engine

Are you driving too much and not walking anymore, and therefore becoming a little fatter? Lucky you, did you know that you can turn your fat into biodiesel at the rate of one litre of grease for one litre of fuel? This was the idea of Beverly Hills doctor Craig Alan Bittner who used the fat of his patients to power his Ford SUV and his girlfriend's Lincoln Navigator. According to Dr. Bittner, "The vast majority of my patients request that I use their fat for fuel… and I have more fat than I can use." Nevertheless, it is illegal in California to use human medical waste for fuel.

It remains unclear when Dr. Bittner began his activities and how he was proceeding. His experiment came to light when dozens of his customers started complaining to the Department of Public Health. He is moreover accused of letting his assistant and girlfriend perform surgeries without necessary skills or medical licenses. Indeed, it seems that several of Bittner's customers were disfigured, because too much fat was removed from their bodies. The state's Department of Public Health will investigate Bit-

The Rolling Bunker © **Automedia**



Pole-position piffle © **Wikipedia**

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tner's practices, but maybe they won't lead anywhere – the doctor has relocated to South America to work in a clinic as a volunteer. Of course, his decision has nothing to do with his being under criminal charges.
www.forbes.com

Advertisement for American Cars

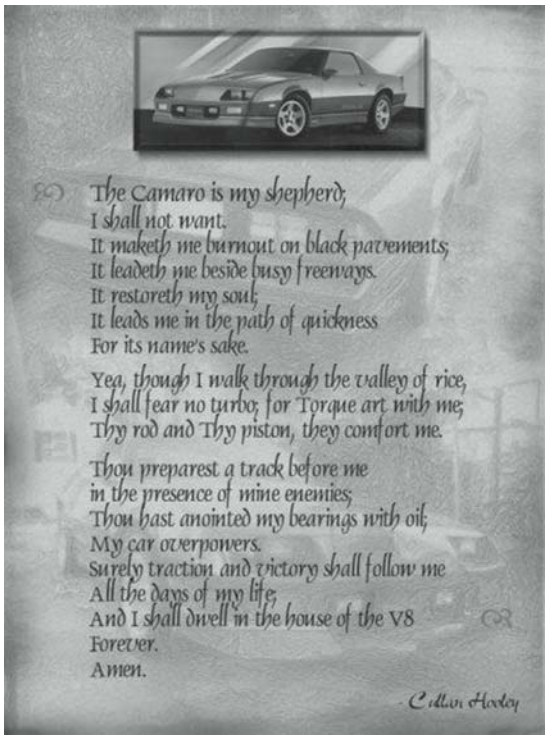
Island Chevrolet general sales manager James Severtson organised a stunt to promote the superiority of American cars. He used a Chevrolet Suburban SUV outfitted with massive tyres, costing US$5,000 a piece, to drive over a Honda Accord. The first attempt by driver Ryan Kepiki was a failure: the monster truck broke down and the Honda remained intact. The truck was repaired and Kepiki managed to crush a Hyundai Excel. "We'd like to send the message that the best way to support your country is to buy an American vehicle today," Severtson said. And of course, the bigger and faster it is, the better…
www.kansascity.com

Flying Car

Many cities in the world are dealing with the problem of saturated road networks. Some hope for change, but others put their trust in technology to offer a solution – not enough space on the roads, let's take to the skies! Next year, for US$200,000, you'll be able to afford the Terrafugia Transition®, the first flying car. It can transform itself from a two-seater road car into a plane in 15 seconds. It can be driven on roads thanks to its foldable wings, but it is necessary to go to an airport, and own a pilot's license, to take off. As claimed on the website, "it's time to make the transition". After the personal car and the personal computer, we now have the personal car-plane. The "car" was exhibited in the Museum of Science, Boston from December 18, 2008 through to January 4, 2009. Nearly 80,000 people saw it.
www.terrafugia.com

Controversial Licence Plates

The Brandenburg Constitutional Protection Authority has warned of several licence plate letter and number combinations that extremists use to identify themselves to the public. The German authority warns that some combinations may express an "antidemocratic mindset". Among the controversial combinations, we find "AH" (Adolf Hitler), "KZ" (concentration camp) and "HJ" (Hitler youth). The Brandenburg Intelligence Service said that not every driver with a "critical code" belongs to far-right extremist groups. The German government however urged auto registration offices to stop assigning combinations that "refer to controversial organisations and parties". Thank you, it was urgent to deal with such a threat to democracy… To paraphrase Pasolini, it is always easier to fight the totalitarianism of the past, than deal with the problems of the present.
www.thelocal.de


The Camaro is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
It maketh me burnout on black pavements;
It leadeth me beside busy freeways.
It restoreth my soul;
It leads me in the path of quickness
For its name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of rice,
I shall fear no turbo; for Torque art with me;
Thy rod and Thy piston, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a track before me
in the presence of mine enemies;
Thou hast anointed my bearings with oil;
My car overpowers.
Surely traction and victory shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of the V8
Forever.
Amen.
Cillian Hooley

Holy Car-ap – Found on the web, a prayer for the Camaro

Eight-Wheeled Electric Car

There is always something new in the world of cars. After five years of work, Dr. Hiroshi Shimizu and the Keio University team created the Eliica: an eight-wheeled car with a 370 km/h top speed. Each of the eight wheels is driven by a 60kW (80 hp) electric motor and utilises lithium ion batteries. The goal of Eliica's team is to beat the world speed record for electric cars. Dr. Shimizu hopes to build a new model that will go faster than 400 km/h. There are currently only two completed Eliicas, each costing an estimated US$320,000 to build. One version is considered the "speed" model, the second, the "acceleration" model. The team is looking for sponsorship to build 200 of them. *Carbusters* won't make a donation…
www.ecogeek.org

Car Cult by Marko Thull

A true off-road vehicle © **Terrafugia-Benjamin Schweighart**

Lightning fast? © **EV World.com**

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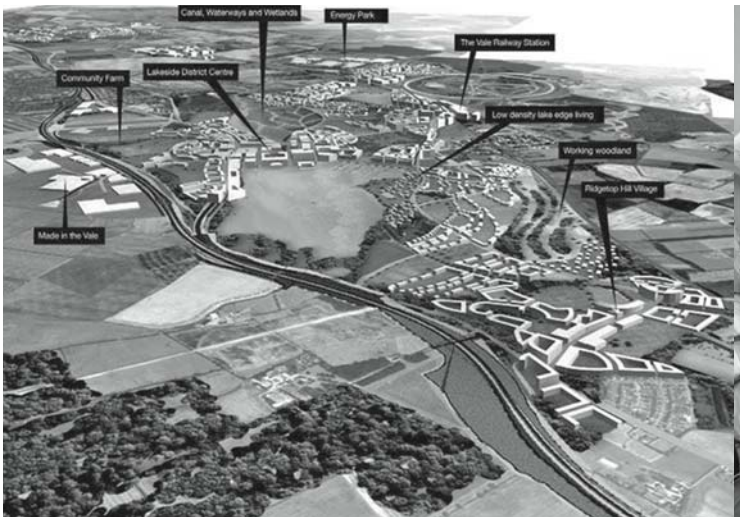

© Carfree UK

© Doldol

Carfree UK Supports Eco-town

A coalition of environmental organisations has been working together to promote a number of eco-town developments across the UK – the largest carfree developments in Europe. During 2007 the UK government announced a programme to build a series of new eco-towns across England, each with a range of sustainability objectives. Following input from Carfree UK, government guidance now recommends that "a substantial proportion" of each of these eco-towns should be carfree.

The process has not been easy. Along with other environmental groups, Carfree UK has been very critical of many of the short-listed locations. Many are too remote and poorly served by rail. One of the better proposals, supported by Carfree UK, would build 15,000 new homes served by five railway stations and Bus Rapid Transit in Marston Vale, in the English Midlands. Approximately 27% of the housing – 4,150 homes – is planned to be carfree, concentrated around the railway stations. The town centre is designed with limited car access, and community facilities, places of work and open public spaces will be created within easy walking distance of the neighbourhoods.

After February 19, final decisions are to be made on the number and location of eco-towns. Carfree UK is arguing that Marston Vale would generate positive international interest, as seen in places like Vauban in Freiburg, Germany.

By Steve Melia

www.carfree.org.uk

Fighting Freeways

With the pressure of numerous different social groups and environmental organisations, two freeway developments planned for two areas of Taiwan have been put on hold. Originally, by the end of 2008, the projects should have already broken ground: one on the Su Hua Highway located on south-east coast and one in Taipei, on the northern tip of the country.

Following thousands of local residents and NGOs signing petitions opposing the developments, regular meetings to gather countermeasures, and using governmental negotiation, prospects for the freeway were temporally suspended. However, the freeways are planned for completion during the second half of 2009, so there is continued reason to fight…

By Huang FeiYue, Tsui SouHim and Shirley Liao – www.wildatheart.org.tw

Cycling Duo Fight Car Culture

ApproTrans is a two-person operation, focusing on the Asia-Pacific region. Current efforts focus on cycling advocacy and combating auto-industry greenwash by highlighting the scourge of so-called 'clean diesel' cars: these have six times the nitrous oxide emissions of petrol equivalents, a fact that is generally unknown in New Zealand and Australia.

The result is that supposedly green conscious consumers replacing dirty petrol cars with even dirtier diesel cars, in the name of the environment. ApproTrans attempts to reverse the trend toward ever more ridiculous transport habits and pointless automotive gimmicks. The duo highlight these issues with filmmaking and an online archive of pictures celebrating carfree living.

www.approtrans.com

© Cary Hendrickson

Cars: Take a Hike

Where space is carved up to accommodate for the automobile's demand for passage, little is left for pedestrians to experience, see, or do. On December 13, a group of M.Sc. students studying sustainability science at Lund University in Sweden sought to tackle this problem by means of direct action – by recreating Prof. Hermann Knoflacher's 'walkmobile' (see *Carbusters* #36). Of the myriad of reasons why widespread automobile use is unsustainable, Knoflacher adds that the automobile hijacks public space in urban and suburban settings. Knoflacher's walkmobile fills 450 cm by 180 cm, the dimensions of a midsize car, and attempts, with added humour, to demonstrate every pedestrian's right to equal space as granted to the automobile.

The students toured the streets

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© Derek Goodwin

© ViaCiclo

Junk Peddlers

Did you ever think that it was possible to have all your trash hauled away by bicycle? Well, now it is. Pedal People are a 12-person cooperative bicycle business in Northampton, Massachusetts, USA. They haul furniture and garbage all year round, but without the noise pollution or diesel fumes of the standard garbage trucks.

The city does not provide municipal trash pickup, only a transfer station in town to take waste. So, recycling by cycling has really taken off: the group now have around 400 customers and a contract with the city of Northampton to empty 80 public trash and recycling barrels. In 2008, they did 12,811 pickups – in heat, rain, ice and snow – using only bicycles and bicycle trailers.

www.pedalpeople.com

Manchester Votes "No"

On a negative note: following a number of public consultations the city of Manchester, UK voted against receiving a £2.7 billion package to improve public transportation. The government money would have been invested into improving public transportation across the city.

Overall, 78.8% voted against the proposed plans and a clear majority opposed paying a weekly congestion charge that was part of the deal. The government determined that seven of the ten metropolitan boroughs that make up Greater Manchester would each have had to vote in favour for the package to have gone ahead – a difficult task, which raises the question of whether the government really wanted a "Yes" result, especially at a time of recession.

By Roger Bysouth

Cycling Towards Sustainability

Cycle organisation ViaCiclo focus on promoting the use of bicycles as a sustainable means of transport in Florianopolis, Brazil.

In 2008, despite no official support, ViaCiclo developed a number of activities with the local Critical Mass group Bicicletada: Vaga Viva (Park[ing] Day), where parking spaces are transformed into living spaces, bike rides and an Intermodal Challenge that pits a car, bicycle and pedestrian against each other in a 'race' through rush hour traffic – demonstrating the efficiency of the bike and sluggishness of cars.

Furthermore, last year saw the group push for the need to build structures that aid the integration of buses with bicycles and pedestrians in the city.

By André Geraldo Soares

www.viaciclo.org.br

Switzerland's Carfree Analysis

The Club of the Carfree People of Switzerland (CAS) is looking back on a successful year, and an even more successful beginning to 2009. Last year was marked by three major events: the completion of a statistical analysis of available data on carfree households and individuals; the establishment of a comprehensive list of annotated tips for carfree living; and the founding of the Swiss Carfree Housing Network, which campaigns for carfree housing projects to be put on the agenda of local governments.

The most important result of the statistics project may be the fact that a growing number of people living in the big cities – irrespective of income – do not own a car. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (NZZ), the most respected Swiss national paper, found this fact newsworthy enough for it to publish an article shortly after New Year, which in turn caused quite a stir in the Swiss media landscape. As an added bonus, this article also caused a sudden increase in CAS membership applications, which have now passed the 1,000 mark. And, this is only the beginning: the NZZ is soon to publish a second article describing the mitigation of environmental impacts coinciding with a carfree lifestyle.

By Dieter Steiner

www.clubderautofreien.ch

with the walkmobile, engaging in what certain observers of culture-jamming have called "critical public pedagogy". While not trying to be explicitly educational or academic, the students tried to engage onlookers while one student even played the role of the mad scientist inventor of the walkmobile. However, more than purely attention grabbing or building awareness, the aim was to get people to reflect on the collective effect of individual behavioural choices. The public demonstration created a collective learning experience: engaging the audience to question the dominant perception of cars, which, in our society, has become deeply embedded in individual identities.

Continuing this culture-jamming theme, the students have created a mock automobile corporation website, inspired by the French theorist Guy Debord, thus using the fake auto company name: Bord Motors.

By Ahoo Salem, Cary Hendrickson, Fabrizio Trocchia and Hitesh Soneji

www.bordmotors.com

Action compiled by Jane Harding

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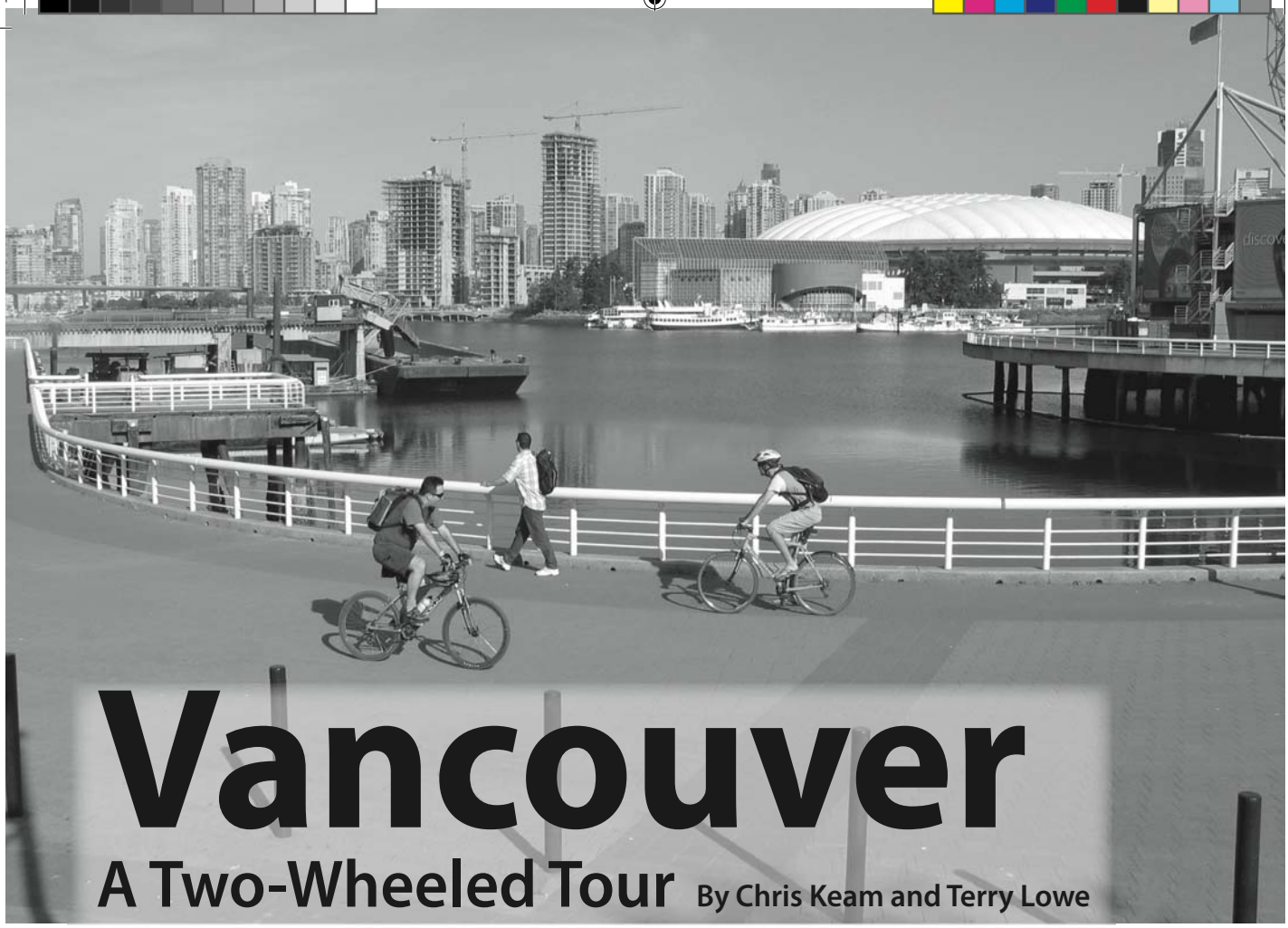

Vancouver

A Two-Wheeled Tour

By Chris Keam and Terry Lowe

It's little wonder that Vancouver regularly places among the top five "world's most livable cities" in annual surveys; on the ground, either on foot or by bike, the city mostly lives up to the hype. This is due in no small part to work done by the city's cycling community. Efforts to promote cycling as transportation are playing an important, ongoing role in maintaining the city's reputation as a great place to live.

While Vancouver can't yet lay claim to the cycling infrastructure and amenities that characterise the leading cycling cities of Europe, there's still much to celebrate here. Municipal support for cycling has improved vastly in the last 25 years, driven by advocates, activists and cycling employees and politicians at City Hall. Investment in cycling from all levels of government has quadrupled since the early 1990s. Over CAN$12.8 million is now invested annually in cycling-related improvements in Metro Vancouver.

Public support is increasingly evident. The recent municipal elections of November 2008 resulted in the election of new mayor Gregor Robertson who along with a number of city councillors are supportive of sustainable transportation in general and in practice, as is shown by their personal decision to use cycling as their usual mode of transportation.

> **"A growing number of Vancouverites use cycling as their primary means of transportation"**

Sowing the Seeds

The seeds of these successes were sown by Vancouver's cycling advocates. Most are volunteers. All work hard to carve out a place for bikes in the transportation spectrum. They lend their time and energy to groups such as the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition (VACC) and Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST). Both organisations work to improve current bike routes and establish new ones, lobby for bike access to transit and bridges, and run education programmes to bring bicycle training to schools and novice adult riders.

VACC and BEST also provide free bike valet parking at public events. This service not only provides peace of mind to cyclists by ensuring their bikes won't be stolen, it also shows that a growing number of Vancouverites use cycling as their primary means of transportation.

A Visible Harvest

Strong arguments and steadfast determination have resulted in the nascent perception of bikes as a solution to transportation in the city, rather than an impediment – a view often expressed by the more rabid automobile fans. Almost without fail, city planners now take cycling into account, and since 2005, city bylaws have required end-of-trip facilities in all new commercial buildings; these include secure bicycle parking, showers and changing rooms.

Bike boxes at traffic light-controlled intersections and bike lanes are now appearing downtown. Unfortunately, these lanes often consist of nothing more than stripes of paint directing cyclists into dangerous "car door" zones, and they often abruptly terminate. The boxes are useful, providing a relatively safe haven for cyclists riding in traffic, but the lanes are "use at your own risk," since there is no defining legislation to protect cyclists within them, nor any legal mechanism to prevent cars from parking in them.

Vancouver in Numbers

City of Vancouver: 117 square kilometres
Metro Vancouver: 2,877 square kilometres
Total kilometres of cycling routes in Metro Vancouver: 2,760
Kilometres of new cycling routes each year: 50
Average rainfall per year: 1,168 mm (46 inches)

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City Hall has also implemented Vancouver's much-admired "bike routes". A bike route is a street – usually adjacent to a major road – that has been optimised for bike travel by blocking car traffic at regular intervals; providing "bike-only" crossings of major cross streets; installing cyclist- and pedestrian-activated traffic signals, and posting prominent signage. And, after 20 years of lobbying and effort, it seems City Hall finally understands the need for separated bike lanes on at least one downtown bridge.

Detailed Vancouver bike route maps are available for free, and a larger overall map showing connections to surrounding suburbs is available at a modest cost. Suburban cities also provide their own free bike maps, but of varying quality.

Bike-rack equipped buses serve the city and nearby suburbs, and while the elevated SkyTrain also allows bikes on board, they are restricted during peak hours. Secure bike storage is available at an increasing number of workplaces, and bike lockers at transit stations are popping up. A web-based bicycle trip planner developed with the "Cycling in Cities" programme at the University of British Columbia has also recently been launched.

Vibrant Past, Present and Future

In addition to cycling advocates, Vancouver also has a rich history of street-level activism and action. Critical Mass-like rides have been a monthly tradition since the 1980s and around the same time a group called the Bicycle People did a Monday morning mass ride across the Lion's Gate Bridge – a major link connecting suburban West Vancouver to the downtown core – demanding access for cyclists. They got it. Direct action does get noticed at City Hall! The colourful story of these advocates and activists has now been immortalised in film. Robert Alstead's documentary *You Never Bike Alone* chronicles the exploits of local bike activists, focusing on the rise of Critical Mass in Vancouver.

The tradition continues unabated, with diverse groups creating Carfree Days, films, radio programmes, too many blogs to count, and the annual World Naked Bike Ride – started in Vancouver in 2003 (See *Carbusters* #35). And, of course, *Momentum Magazine* is located in Vancouver.

There are many social bike rides, attracting everyone from fixies to cruisers, roadies to choppers. One of these, Midnight Mass, starts at – yes – midnight every other Thursday. The Vancouver Bicycle Club, first formed in 1902 and still going strong, offers a variety of non-competitive weekend rides, rated by length and required stamina.

Riding year-round here is possible and rewarding... but the most fun happens in summer! Each June is promoted as "Bike Month" in Vancouver. The Bike to Work Week of June 2008 attracted almost 6,000 participants, nearly a quarter of them brand-new bike commuters. Summer also sees an eruption of exuberant "Velomutational" bike frolics: parties in parks, bike polo games, alley cat races, Midnight Mass rides, parades, weddings, street festivals, chopper workshop and lazy picnics on the beach.

Vancouver's bike culture is thriving and growing. And as much as activists will always find something to protest (that being a fine Vancouver tradition), the advocates are clearly optimistic due to the election of our bike-commuting mayor and cycling city councillors. Overall, life on two wheels here is very good indeed.

For more information about Vancouver, please visit:
www.carfreevancouver.org
www.fixedvancouver.com
www.momentumplanet.com
pedalrevolutionary.blogspot.com
www.vacc.bc.ca
www.vbc.bc.ca

All images © **Amy Walker**

Vancouver Rider Profile: Deirdre Arscott

By Amy Walker

Occupation: **Systems Analyst, Web Development**
Age: **54**
Passion: **Cycling, eating!**

How long have you been using a bike for transportation and why did you choose to bike?
All my life! I lived in Cambridge, England until I was 12. A huge portion of the population of Cambridge commutes by bicycle, so for me cycling came naturally. People ask me why I commute by bike. The question should be: "Why do they drive?" Bicycles are practical and efficient. I feel great when I ride my bike and I love the feel of the wind on my face. Commuting gives me a base level of fitness and keeps me healthy, both mentally and physically.

What do you love about riding in Vancouver?
I love riding along Spanish Banks and seeing the ocean, the mountains and the city. Where else can you do that? I'm really pleased that the City of Vancouver has so many bike routes.

What do you hate about riding there?
The traffic and the urban sprawl! Every year there are more cars on the roads. Some routes that I used to ride are now so busy that I wouldn't dream of cycling there anymore. The Greater Vancouver area is quickly eating up all the land in the Fraser Valley. It takes a long time to get out of the city in order to access quiet country roads.

What could be done to improve cycling in Vancouver?
Make it easier to get out of the Vancouver area by bike. Cyclists want efficient, direct routes to get to places. For the provincial government, cyclists are an afterthought. Most bridges do not have enough room for cyclists. Often the shoulder is very narrow or the cyclist must ride a sidewalk covered with debris. The Pitt River Bridge is a nightmare for cyclists at the moment. Coming back into town it is difficult and dangerous to make the turn onto the Mary Hill Bypass.

The Patullo Bridge sidewalk more often than not has broken glass on it. The routes onto the Alex Fraser Bridge are convoluted and not well signed. It does help that the buses can carry bikes through the tunnel but if you are on a group ride, you must wait for the shuttle or take the Alex Fraser. The Albion ferry is a great crossing for cyclists but that will be out of service when the new bridge goes in.

Are you involved in bike culture or advocacy – is there a group or person you think is doing great work?
The VACC does a good job. Marion Orser and Peter Stary work hard at bicycle advocacy.

Favourite piece of gear for riding?
My helmet!

What does being a "self-propelled person" mean to you?
Using my own muscles to get places! I ride with the BC Randonneurs, an ultra marathon cycling club. With the Randonneurs you can ride anything powered by muscle alone (no engines, no wind power). It's absolutely amazing how far you can go on a bicycle, and you don't have to be a super athlete either.
www.randonneurs.bc.ca

***Amy Walker** is the publisher of* Momentum Magazine.

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Dancing in the Streets

The *Ciclovia* Surge in US Cities

By Kristen Steele

Cities are experimenting. Concrete jungles and bustling thoroughfares are being transformed. Streets, the veins and arteries of communities, are experiencing a different pulse: this one is a bit quieter and full of a lot more joy. From New York City to Miami, Chicago to San Francisco, and Portland to Kentucky, a nation obsessed with driving is importing a revolutionary idea from South America. It's urban parks in the streets. It's *Ciclovia* – in the US – and the trend is booming.

Beginning with Bogotá

Ciclovia (a Spanish word meaning "bike path") refers to the temporary closure of a network or section of streets to cars, and opening of the street to people who bike, walk, skate and participate in a number of free activities. *Ciclovia* is the buzzword now with cities across North America, and Bogotá, Colombia is largely credited with the concept. The sprawling city of over seven million has been closing streets to cars and opening them to people for more than 30 years. The original aim was to get more people physically active, ward off obesity and encourage intermixing of different ethnic and socio-economic groups.

Gil Peñalosa became the hero of Bogotá's *Ciclovia* when he took office as the city's park commissioner in the 1990s. At the time there were 13 km of roads that made up the *Ciclovia*. In two years he increased the distance of, and participation in, *Ciclovia* nearly tenfold. Today, roughly 112 km of city streets are closed to cars every Sunday and holiday from 7am to 2pm. Up to a million and a half residents come to take a free dance class, ride their bike, skate, walk their dog, or do aerobics.

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Ciclovias Hit US

A number of world cities have followed Bogotá's lead. Melbourne, Quito, Mexico City, Paris and Ottawa all have hosted *Ciclovias*. Walk + Roll organised the first *Ciclovia*-like event in the US in Cleveland, Ohio, in 2006. El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico followed in 2007. And in 2008 Chicago, New York, Portland, San Francisco, Miami, Lakewood, Ohio, and 71 Kentucky counties held carfree parkway events for the first time. Chicago advocates at the Active Transportation Alliance had been working towards their Sunday Parkways event for two years. They worked to establish relationships with local community groups and fundraised 100% of the cost for two carfree events. In Miami, advocates at the Green Mobility Network proposed the idea to mayor Manny Diaz along with other bicycling initiatives in February 2008. With mayor Diaz as its champion, the first Bike Miami event took place just nine months later.

All of these events succeeded in drawing people off their couches and onto the streets. An estimated 50,000 people came out for each of New York City's three Summer Streets events. San Francisco's Sunday Streets drew 10,000 to each event. Kentucky's Second Sunday estimates 10,000 people participated across the state. According to John Hopkins of Miami's Green Mobility Network, "The mayor's office had thought 500 participants would justify the effort and make a second (Bike Miami) event possible – and we had nearly 2,000."

A Sight that Inspires

Witnessing the transformation of a street from a loud, fast-paced dangerous space, to a quiet welcoming place is powerful. The sight is inspiring. Almost all US events credit the inspiration to Bogotá's *Ciclovia*. Personal visits, photos and videos have made witnesses of civic leaders around the globe. These leaders become determined to bring the carfree parkway to their city. Mayor Diaz became convinced after a meeting with former Bogotá mayor Enrique Peñalosa. Kentucky's Second Sunday arose from the testimony of someone who had witnessed the magic in Bogotá. And Chicago's Sunday Parkways was championed by a delegation of community organisers who visited Bogotá to see *Ciclovia* firsthand.

Yoga, Dancing, Kickball, and…

Besides creating safe, quiet space to bike, walk, run and skate, *Ciclovias* typically offer a host of other free activities coordinated by community organisations. The various events prove the endless possibilities of opening streets to people. Kentucky's Second Sunday event featured dog bone hunts and a baby stroller workout. At San Francisco's Sunday Streets hula-hoops and ping-pong were hits. Clevelanders square-danced and belly-danced at the third annual Walk + Roll Cleveland. Transportation Alternatives offered escorted bike rides to the first Summer Streets. The New York City event also featured a Bike Helmet Fitting and Giveaway, four square, cha-cha dancing and hopscotch. One and a half thousand New Yorkers enjoyed free aerobics, dance and martial arts classes at each event. Chicago's Sunday Parkways offered a Bungee run, bouncy boxing, flag football, hip-hop gospel and a potato-sack race. You could also find Chicagoans in a 3-on-3-basketball tourney or skateboarding on a temporary skate ramp. Portland's Sunday Parkways featured pilates, free pedometers, an Elders in Action guided walk, tai chi, tango dancing, and juggling and unicycle lessons. The long lists of activities provide something for everyone.

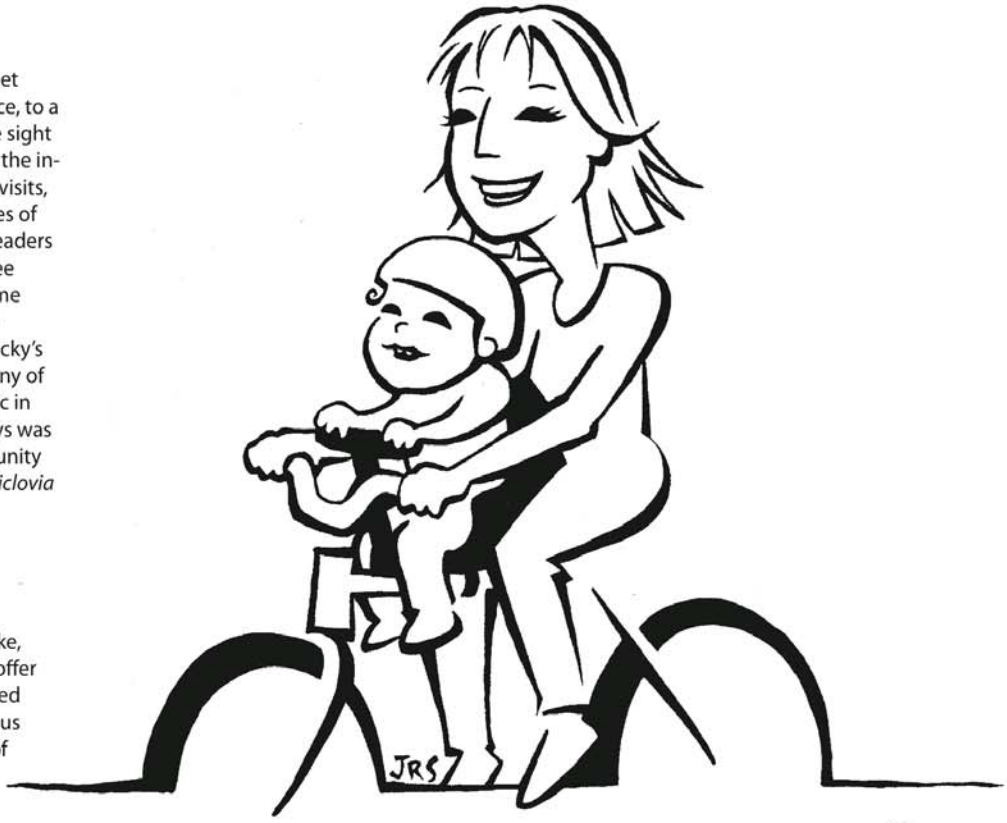
"The transformation of a street from a loud, fast-paced dangerous space, to a quiet welcoming place is powerful"

Mass Activity

Public health is the number one objective behind this new wave of carfree events. More than one-third of US adults are obese. Low-income and minority communities are at an even greater risk of obesity and also face disproportionately high rates of asthma, heart disease and diabetes. One selling feature of the *Ciclovia* concept to promote health is that it's cheap. There are no capital costs to opening streets to people. No new infrastructure is needed. According to Gil Peñalosa, "It would seem impossible to have so many people physically active all at once. In a city like Guadalajara, where over 170,000 people participate in their Via Recreactiva, decision makers know that at 30 players per soccer field, they would need 5,666 soccer fields to have the same amount of people active." In underserved communities, without infrastructure and places to safely bike, walk and recreate, the *Ciclovia* can be especially vital to fostering a more physically active culture.

Connecting Communities

These carfree events are also connecting communities that are otherwise separated by roads, traffic and invisible socio-economic borders. In the early days of Bogotá's *Ciclovia*, people from the poorer section of the city and those from more affluent neighbourhoods would stop at their respective bound-



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aries. After a while people were mixing freely as invisible borders vanished. Peñalosa likes the egalitarian nature of the *Ciclovia*. He says, "It is a place where owners of large corporations, along with their families, end up doing the same activities as their minimum wage workers and their families. Although they do not live in the same buildings and their kids do not go to the same schools, when they are in the *Ciclovia*, they meet as equals."

San Francisco sought a similar social benefit linking for the first time the Bayview, an isolated low-income neighbourhood, with other parts of the city along the six-mile route. Some residents got to enjoy new parts of the city for the first time without the fear of traffic. Chicago also focused the Sunday Parkways in lower-income neighbourhoods where few bike shops exist and gang activity and traffic generally prevent people from feeling safe on the streets.

Benefiting Business

Despite the many advantages, merchants can be persistent sceptics of *Ciclovias* before they happen. Some think that their business will suffer if cars are limited on the roads. According to Hopkins, before Bike Miami "there was a lot of scepticism about it from managers of the downtown condominiums near the closed streets and from some of the merchants there." In San Francisco, merchants at Fisherman's Wharf, a popular tourist and shopping destination near the route, were also fearful of the impact the event would have on business. According to Cheryl Brinkman of San Francisco-based Livable City, "they seem to believe that without the steady stream of cars along the Embarcadero their businesses cannot survive."

Most events prove skeptics wrong by ushering in a boom in business. Of Bike Miami, Hopkins says, "owners of cafes and coffee shops were especially pleased that so many people stopped in for breakfast, lunch or refreshments. In fact, it was barely 10:30 that morning when the manager of the shops where I was tending bike valet came out to ask, 'How soon can we do this again?'" In San Francisco, according to Brinkman, "The Fisherman's Wharf merchants did not have any hard numbers about whether businesses was down. But the Ferry Building, another retail spot on the route, had merchants saying that some had business increases up to 300%. Not one merchant said business was slower then usual, all said it was up."

All Illustrations © Jim Swanson

New Friends

Ciclovias can also be a door opener to new supporters of cycling. After San Francisco's Sunday Streets event, city supervisor Sophie Maxwell, not known for her support of biking and walking, started talking about permanently closing some city streets to cars: "If I had a magic wand I would want to see a couple of streets be turned over to cyclists, free of vehicles, all day every day." Besides convincing local leaders of the virtues of carfree streets, these events can open doors to new partnerships for livable streets advocates. Working with new community groups helps create a platform for talking about bicycling and walking in the future.

"*Ciclovia* can be especially vital to fostering a more physically active culture"

The Word on the Street

The success of *Ciclovias* is contagious, and most cities aren't looking back. After the first two Bike Miami events, mayor Diaz declared it would be a monthly event. San Francisco is also expanding their Sunday Streets to six Sundays (up from two Sundays in 2008). According to Brinkman, "We are working on funding, which may be tough in this economic climate, but I think free events such as this are going to be even more important now that people have less money to spend." Organisers in Kentucky also plan to continue Second Sunday in 2009 and are looking for a statewide corporate sponsor to help promote the event. Walk + Roll hopes to expand to four Cleveland-area locations for 2009. Portland also has plans to expand to three or four *Ciclovias* this summer.

But even with community will, funding can be limiting, especially if the local government is not behind the event. According to Peñalosa, Ottawa, Canada's Sunday Bikedays, which closes a 48 km route to cars every Sunday, May through September, operates on the budget of a single Sunday Parkways event in Chicago. This is largely because of the high cost of police and permits required by Chicago. The Active Transportation Alliance (ATA) is conducting evaluations to make the case that Sunday Parkways should be a city-owned and city-run event. The first two Sunday Parkways in 2008 were funded by a number of grants to the ATA, local community groups, in-kind support from the Chicago Park District, and ATA general funds.

New York City-based Streetfilms has been on the frontlines of documenting *Ciclovias* and planting the seeds of ideas in communities. Their short video of Bogotá's *Ciclovia* is what San Francisco organisers claim convinced mayor Gavin Newsom to champion the event. Streetfilms has short films documenting 2008 carfree Sunday events in Portland, San Francisco, New York and Chicago.

With so many inspiring examples, the concept is expected to continue to spread to other cities. Baltimore and Ferguson, Missouri are among those planning events for 2009. Peñalosa says, "In a period of economic recession, projects like *Ciclovias* are ideal as they do not require major capital investments or building facilities which take much money and time. It is a better way of using existing infrastructure."

The sudden surge in carfree streets events is encouraging. It begs the question: Are we finally nearing a tipping point with the way cities view streets and public space? Brinkman says, "I think that people are starting to realise how great urban life can be without the constant intrusion of the automobile and how many things become possible when you use streets in a different way."

While the impact of these events remains to be seen, the happiness experienced cannot be denied. Streetfilms' Clarence Eckerson Jr. sums up New York City's Summer Streets and the seemingly shared sentiment of all *Ciclovia* witnesses: "The city built it – and the people came. And they smiled a lot."

For more information about *Ciclovias* in these US cities, please visit,
Miami: **bikemiamiblog.wordpress.com**
Cleveland: **www.walkroll.com/cleveland**
Chicago: **www.biketraffic.org/sundayparkways**
San Francisco: **www.sundaystreetssf.com**
Kentucky: **www.2ndsundayky.com**
New York: **www.nyc.gov/summerstreets**
Streetfilms' *Ciclovia* videos: **www.streetfilms.org**

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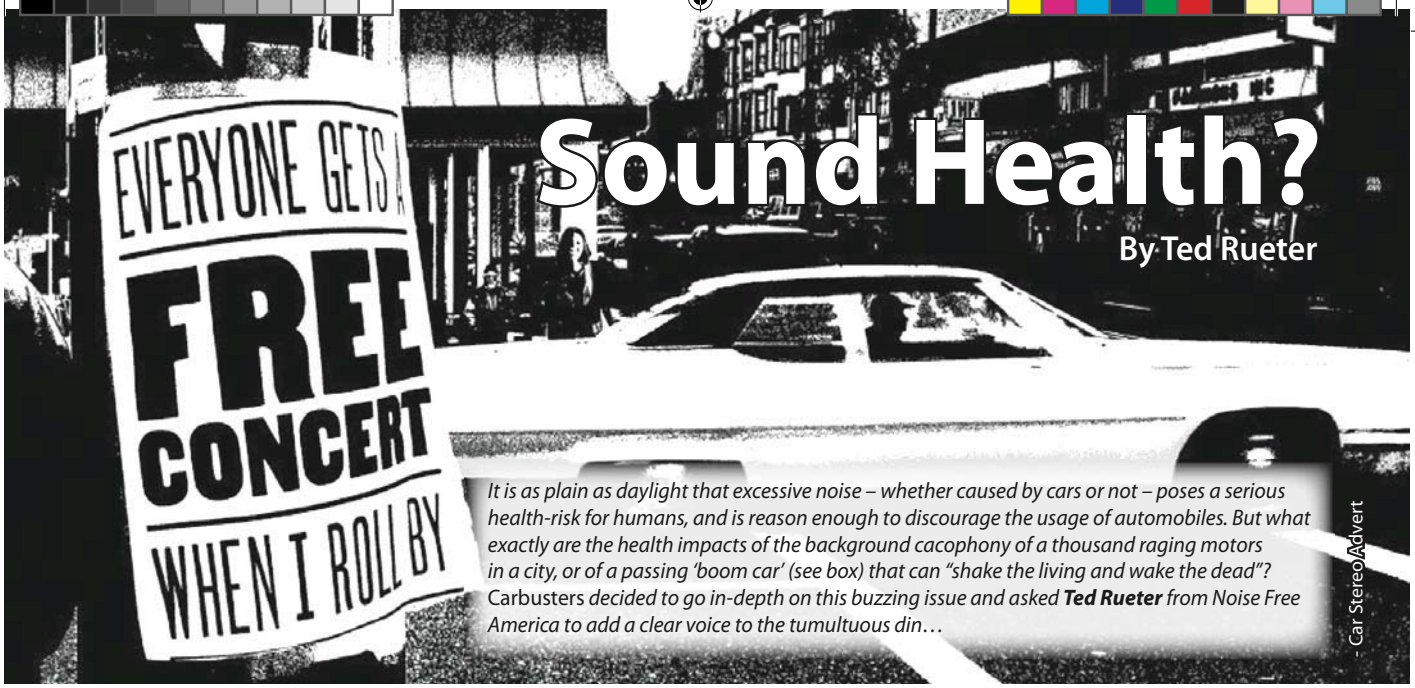

Sound Health?

By Ted Rueter

*It is as plain as daylight that excessive noise – whether caused by cars or not – poses a serious health-risk for humans, and is reason enough to discourage the usage of automobiles. But what exactly are the health impacts of the background cacophony of a thousand raging motors in a city, or of a passing 'boom car' (see box) that can "shake the living and wake the dead"? Carbusters decided to go in-depth on this buzzing issue and asked **Ted Rueter** from Noise Free America to add a clear voice to the tumultuous din…*

- Car Stereo Advert

Noise does a body bad. Excessive noise has been linked to hearing loss, tinnitus, sleep deprivation, cardiovascular disturbances, mental health impairment, impaired task performance, aggressive behaviour and chronic fatigue. And while its effects have been studied excessively, noise levels throughout the world are growing at alarming levels.

Major Causes of Noise Pollution

Noise levels greater than 80 decibels (dB) are considered potentially hazardous. Increasingly, everyday sounds approach or exceed this level. For example, a vacuum cleaner is around 70 dB. An alarm clock can emit 80 dB. Lawnmowers, shop tools, truck traffic and subways approach 90 dB. Snowmobiles and chainsaws are around 100 dB, while model airplanes can exceed 110 dB. Physically painful noise includes car stereos at 140 dB, a jackhammer at 130 dB, jet engines at 140 dB, and the peak of a rock concert at 150 dB. Other sources of noise between 90 and 140 dB include motorcycles, firearms, firecrackers, headset listening systems, tractors, garbage disposals, blenders and noisy toys.

You Deserve a Beating...

'Boom cars' are automobiles equipped with extremely powerful stereo systems that crank as much as 1,000 watts of pure hell. Growing out of rap culture, they were primarily used by neighbourhood drug dealers who wanted to alert their customers that they were in the area.

They were later popularised by music videos and have since spread like a virus. Cunning adverts target young males with the repeated idea that girls like guys who drive such machines – sexist themes in boom car ads are extremely common. Anti-social behaviour also was heavily encouraged, with the aggressive, constant pounding and thumping from boom cars presented as a 'cool' thing.

Boom cars lie at the core of an anti-social subculture and are a growing public nuisance. Meanwhile this noise menace is expanding in more 'mainstream' areas: loud car stereos have also become standard equipment on some Ford and Nissan models.

> **"Noise can lead to a sense of helplessness"**

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders estimates that 30 million Americans are exposed to harmful levels of noise in their jobs every day – especially fire-fighters, disc jockeys, subway workers, construction workers, musicians, landscapers and factory workers. The US Environmental Protection Agency concludes that more than 130 million Americans live in areas with dangerously high levels of noise. Meanwhile, continued exposure to noise of greater than 85 dB may cause gradual but permanent damage to hearing.

What's the Buzz About?

Excessive noise can also cause tinnitus: a ringing in the ears that may sound like whining, buzzing, humming or whistling. Some tinnitus victims have been led to suicide because of the extreme, constant irritation. Noise is also a major cause of sleep deprivation, which can result in obesity, depression, diabetes, lowered intellectual achievement and cardiovascular disease. Every person's productivity, performance and emotional well-being is linked with getting good sleep.

In addition, a growing body of evidence confirms that noise pollution has both temporary and permanent effects on the endocrine and autonomic nervous systems. According to RN Lisa Goines and Dr. Louis Hagler, "it has been postulated that noise acts as a non-specific biologic stressor eliciting reactions that prepare the body for a fight or flight response. For this reason, noise can trigger both endocrine and autonomic system responses that affect the cardiovascular system and thus may be a risk factor for cardiovascular disease."

While noise is not a major cause of mental illness, it does appear to accelerate and worsen its development. Goines and Hagler state that noise pollution may cause or contribute to "anxiety, stress, nervousness, nausea, headache, emotional instability, argumentativeness, sexual impotence, change in mood, increase in social conflicts, neurosis, hysteria, and psychosis."

Less Education, More Violence

Noise pollution has a clear effect on cognitive task performance: decreasing motivation, increasing errors and impairing performance at work and school. Noise strongly affects memory, problem-solving and reading attention. Cognitive and language development, as well as reading achievement, are lessened in noisy homes. One study compared the effect of noise upon the test results of students in the same school. Half the students were in classrooms abutting a railroad track; the other half not. Students in the quiet classrooms performed much better.

Noise levels above 80 dB are also associated with an increase in aggressive behaviour. Numerous scientific studies indicate that noise may trigger unfriendliness, social disengagement, anger, dissatisfaction, disappointment, depression, anxiety, distraction and agitation. Noise can lead to a sense of helplessness. Noise-related agitation has been the cause of shootings, stabbings and murder.

The Last Bell

The adverse social, physiological and psychological effects of noise pollution, therefore, have been well studied. What remains to be done is to increase awareness on the issue and work to create an environment around us which recognises the inherent human need for quiet; the need for peace.

For more information, please visit, www.noisefree.org and www.noiseoff.org.

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Steel

Steel is the skeleton and skin of the car and usually weighs in at over one metric tonne per car. Consisting of over 98% iron, which is alloyed by various elements, steel's great weight is clearly the biggest force pulling down a car's fuel economy. Aluminium may be a much lighter alternative, but is four times the price of steel, leaving the car industry reluctant to change. More information on the problems caused by steel production can be found on page 18.

Water

UNESCO calculates that the average 1.1 tonne car consumes about 400,000 litres of water in its production. This figure refers to "blue water" – i.e. perfectly drinkable surface or ground water. Several studies indicate that the average human needs at least 50 litres of water per day for survival (drinking, sanitation and hygiene). Therefore one car consumes, in production alone, water that would satisfy the daily needs of 8,000 people – let alone the water polluted during the use and disposal of the car's many toxic components.

Tyres

Rubber, derived from petrochemicals and rubber plant extract, has many uses, but the majority of worldwide production is consumed by the auto industry. The Para rubber tree is native to Amazonia, but currently 90% of the crop is based in Southeast Asia in predominantly monoculture plantations replacing subtropical and tropical forests. Balancing these tyres are wheel weights, which are usually lead-based. Though most European and Asian car models have switched to zinc or steel weights, models from the Big Three in the US are still usually made with this cheap, but highly toxic metal.

Countless used tyres are left at the side of the road or in makeshift "tyre graveyards". Such places are prone to fires that are very difficult to handle. One such example was the 1999 fire that incinerated millions of scrap tyres at a tyre graveyard in Westley, California. It was caused by a thunderbolt and took 30 days to extinguish.

People tend to quantify the pollution of cars mostly in terms of fuel exhaust, but the materials involved in a car's production, use and disposal are sufficient enough reasons to give up the car. The auto industry is the largest manufacturing industry in the US, accounting for 60%-70% of its consumption of lead, iron and rubber. Considering that 13,600 kg of waste material is generated per car produced, this amounts to a mammoth ecological footprint. **Chris Coleman** attempts to highlight the worst by-products hiding behind the car's shiny veneer.

What's Behind the Wheel?

Graphic © Valentin Aguado

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Motor Oil

Literally the blood of the engine, motor oil is not water soluble, and one litre of oil can pollute nearly one megalitre of water. Used oil that leaks from engines or is not properly handled after oil changes amounts to 681 million litres a year in the US: a staggering 16 times more than was spilled by Exxon Valdez in 1989. In addition, engine wear releases toxins such as cadmium, arsenic and benzene into the oil that, when improperly handled, are harmful to aquatic ecosystems.

Car Batteries

Lead-acid batteries, the predominant car battery, are composed of plates of (guess what) lead, submerged in a solution of sulphuric acid. Lead has long been known as a neurological poison, but it is much cheaper than the alternatives of nickel and manganese as a base battery metal. These heavy batteries account for 64% of the world's usage of lead. A typical lead smelting factory releases over 50 tonnes of lead into the air per annum.

Car Seat Fabrics

Brominated flame retardants (BFRs) and other hazardous chemicals are common in the fabrics of car interiors. These toxins are often not chemically bound to the fabrics and "off-gas" into the car's interior atmosphere. For instance, the chemicals found on car seats break down under exposure to UV radiation to create the BFRs pentaBDE and octaBDE, which lead to permanent learning impairment and decreased sperm count. A chemical survey by the US Ecology Center found that 79% of the front seats of global 2008 models contained detectable levels of BFRs.

Dashboard Plastics

Lead is still sometimes used as an additive in flexible PVC for interior plastics. European makers were forced to phase out the use of lead by 2007, according to the End of Life Vehicle Directive, but it is still commonly found in American models. For example, of the 2007 Chevy models, 40% had lead levels of over 100ppm and a further 20% had traceable levels in car interior parts.

Mercury Switches

Mercury switches were commonly used for many functions in cars, from door lights and headlamps, to anti-lock brakes and family entertainment systems. Though they have been replaced over the past ten years by ball-bearing switches in all but a few current Ford and General Motors vehicles, that still leaves 170-200 million of these highly toxic switches in cars currently on US roads. If not separated before a car is recycled, these switches release mercury particulates into the atmosphere during the steel melting process that eventually deposit into our water and soil systems, collecting especially in the fish people eat.

Catalytic Converters

Catalytic converters may function to filter toxic pollutants from car emissions, but the catalysts doing the filtering are usually the precious metals platinum or palladium. Nearly half of the world's platinum and palladium is mined in Norilsk in Northern Central Siberia, where weak environmental regulations are practiced. Norilsk is considered one of the 10 most polluted places on Earth by *TIME*: not a single tree can be found in a 48 km radius of the smelters due to the 4 million tonnes of metal particulates such as lead and arsenic released annually. In addition, platinum smelters are known producers of dioxins.

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Standing up to the Steel Industry

The Fight for Clean Air, Land and Water

By Pippa Gallop

On December 29, 2008, Indian social activist and journalist Dayamani Barla was awarded the Chingari Award for Women Against Corporate Crime for her campaigning against a planned greenfield mega steel mill in the Indian state of Jharkhand. Her target was the largest steel company in the world: the Luxembourg-based ArcelorMittal, whose planned US$9.3 billion, 12 million tonne per year plant threatens to displace people from 30-40 villages in the Khunti and Gumla districts. ArcelorMittal and its steel-making peers – which share a symbiotic relationship with the auto industry –are rapidly gaining a bad reputation globally for pollution and destruction of agricultural land.

As one of the biggest consumers of steel globally (along with the construction industry), demand in the car industry naturally drives demand for the steel industry's expansion plans. The 15.4 million vehicles produced in North America in 2007 consumed an estimated 15.3 million tonnes of steel – about 15% of total end-market steel demand.[1] In the EU, the car manufacturing industry consumes around 11 million tonnes of steel per year.[2] The mass availability of steel at an affordable price has been an essential precondition for the growth of the auto industry during the 20th century, and although there has been an increase in the use of aluminium and other materials during recent decades, steel continues to dominate car-making.

Yet compared to the oil industry, steel-making, as the other great automobile support industry, has received relatively little attention from those not directly affected by it. This is partly because steel-making, being relatively static and often well away from affluent areas, rarely produces mobile and long-lasting incidents like oil spills. Steel facilities have generally been there for several decades, and slow death through air pollution does not make a sexy media story.

Plants in Europe and the US may be expected to be cleaner than elsewhere due to stricter pollution control standards, but while this may be true in some cases, there are also some heavily polluting steel mills in the so-called 'developed' countries.

'Developed' Pollution

Take the plant in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, operated by Mittal Steel, now ArcelorMittal, since 2005 after it took over International Steel Group. ArcelorMittal's largest customers in the US are the big names in the automotive industry, like General Motors, Ford, DaimlerChrysler and Toyota.[3] With the collapse in demand in late 2008 for cars and thus for the steel products made by the plant, it is currently idled, but when it opens again its neighbours can expect a resumption of the soot, fine metal particles, smells and noise that they have suffered for years.

A few weeks after ArcelorMittal idled the Cleveland plant, Tremont neighbour Phil Pavarinni explained, "Almost daily this past summer, I used to smell rotten egg odours multiple times a week. But we haven't smelt them in the last several weeks. I would also get very frequent headaches, which also seemed to have subsided. We also haven't heard the loud horns and jet engine noises at night."

In April 2008 three steel companies feeding the automotive industry[4] appeared in the top ten of the Political Economy Research Institute's Toxic 100 – the top corporate air polluters in the US. ArcelorMittal appeared at No. 7, along with US Steel at No. 8 and AK Steel at No. 10.[5] The Cleveland Plant, ArcelorMittal's dirtiest US plant according to the ranking, reported releasing in 2006 – the latest year for which data is available – 10.69 tonnes of zinc, 1.47 tonnes of manganese, 633 kg of hydrochloric acid, 165 kg of lead, 33 kg of chromium, 10 kg of cadmium, and 40 g of mercury into Cleveland's air[6].

If this is the situation in countries with supposedly higher environmental standards, it is unsurprising that the situation elsewhere is even more dramatic.

The Steel-Dragon's Bad Breath

China's rapidly expanding steel industry is attracting global attention with its massive pollution. As the world's biggest steel producer with 489.2 million tonnes of crude steel in 2007, China produces four times that of its nearest rival, Japan.[7] Yet with 36.4% of global production[8] it manages to emit around 50%

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[1] Carlos Gomes: Global Auto Report, Scotiabank Group, November 28, 2008, www.scotiacapital.com/English/bns_econ/bns_auto.pdf
[2] European Commission: Technology Platform offers new dynamism for European steel, March 22, 2004 ec.europa.eu/research/industrial_technologies/articles/article_807_en.html#4
[3] Presentation by Mittal Steel representative at Cleveland State University, 2006.
[4] US Steel website: www.ussteel.com/corp/company/profile/about.asp
AK Steel website: www.aksteel.com/markets_products/
[5] Political Economy Research Institute's Toxic 100 - the top corporate air polluters in the US www.peri.umass.edu/toxic100/, April 2008
[6] *ibid.*
[7] World Steel Association: World Steel in Figures 2008, 2nd Edition, 2008.
[8] *ibid.*

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of global steel-making CO_2 emissions[9] due to the prevalence of old and inefficient plants and its dependence on coal power. In 2007, China's steel industry discharged 1.73 million tonnes of sulphur dioxide (7% of the national total), 1.07 million tonnes of dust (15%) and 228.5 million tonnes of solid waste (13%).[10] A relatively small proportion of China's steel is used for car manufacturing: in 2007, the output of automobile steel in China was 12.55 million tonnes, but demand is growing rapidly and is expected to reach 27.67 million tonnes already by 2010.[11] China had 129 million private cars and motorcycles in 2008, an increase of 6.4% from 2007.[12]

There is not a wealth of information available on how the Chinese populace is reacting to the steel industry's pollution. However, in 2006 the head of the state environment protection administration, Zhou Shengxian, declared that there had been more than 50,000 pollution-related "disputes" in the country during 2005 and that the number had been rising by about 30% each year.[13]

A Rising Tide of Reactions in India

As Dayamani Barla's award for the struggle in Jharkhand indicates, India is also a hotbed of protest against the steel industry's expansion. The social conflicts have reached dramatic proportions, with Dayamani herself twice receiving death threats for her activities. As well as the Jharkhand campaign, ArcelorMittal is also facing heated resistance in the Keonjhar district of Orissa, where it plans a similar 12 million tonne per year mega steel plant, which would require the resettlement of indigenous people. POSCO, the South Korean steel company, is facing similar problems in the Jagatsinghpur district of the same state, where it plans a US$12 billion steel plant but is opposed by around 20,000 local people who say that it would take away their land and destroy their livelihoods. Altogether, media reports state, 49 memoranda of understanding for setting up steel plants in the Orissa have been signed, with a total capacity of 75.66 million tonnes of steel per year.[14] Of these, 28 steel mills have already gone into production, with a total output of 3.8 million tonnes per annum.[15]

"The obvious question is whether these battles against the steel industry's expansion have already been won by the financial crisis"

As well as permits for the steel mills themselves, concessions for exploiting iron ore and coal mines are being liberally distributed, particularly in Orissa, which as of 2006 had 33.91% of India's iron ore reserves and 27.59% of its coal reserves, in addition to a host of other minerals.[16] The mines have had a dramatic impact on wildlife in the Keonjhar and Sundergarh districts of Orissa,[17] known for their rich biodiversity.

The Indian car industry took a direct hit in late 2008 when protests by local people in Singur, West Bengal, forced the Tata conglomerate to relocate its half-built Tata Nano car manufacturing plant to Gujarat, delaying the manufacture of the US$2,500 "world's cheapest car". The Tata group, whose extensive empire includes Tata Steel, the world's sixth largest steel company, as well as the troubled British Jaguar Land Rover luxury vehicle brand, had been subject to intensive protests from farmers whose land it had acquired, and decided to halt construction of its plant in October.

Future Challenges

The obvious question is whether these battles against the steel industry's expansion have already been won by the financial crisis. Certainly we can expect to see some of the plans being put back or cancelled, but the delay may only be temporary. The struggle between India's subsistence farmers and heavy industry is set to continue, as well as the gargantuan task of getting China's steelmakers to clean up or close down.

Where the plants already exist, the financial crisis is certainly interrupting production, but recent moves from the US and EU member-state governments have made it clear that even poorly managed car-makers are not really subject to the basic rules of a market economy. They will not be allowed to go bust, and the steel-makers won't either. The challenge for local communities is to convince steel companies that having a low patch doesn't absolve them from their environmental obligations, while the challenge for carfree advocates is to ensure that the market for cars doesn't grow back to the size it was before the collapse.

[9] World Steel Association position paper: A global sector approach to CO_2 emissions reduction for the steel industry, December 2007, www.worldsteel.org/index.php?action=storypages&id=226
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Pippa Gallop *is a volunteer activist in WCN member group Green Action in Croatia and works for CEE Bankwatch Network monitoring investments made by international financial institutions. This also includes participation in Global Action on ArcelorMittal, a network of community and environmental groups from around the world working to get ArcelorMittal to invest in pollution prevention and health and safety at its steel mills and mines.*
www.globalaction-arcelormittal.org

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By Jane Harding

Interview with Social Experimentalist David Engwicht

Tricks of a Traffic Tamer

For over 20 years David Engwicht has been thinking about transportation in bold new ways. He is internationally recognised for his work on traffic calming and street reclaiming – using intrigue and uncertainty to automatically slow motorists. Engwicht's ultimate goal, outlined in his book Mental Speed Bumps, *is to reduce the speed and quantity of traffic in cities by as much as 50%. He is credited with inventing the popular 'Walking School Bus' and 'Street Reclaiming' programmes, both of which offer inspiration for creating safer communities and for regaining control over lost social space. Regularly taking to the streets himself on his Street Reclaiming Throne, Engwicht likes nothing better than to demonstrate how wacky and thought-provoking activities can tame reckless and thoughtless motorists. And, he encourages people to take direct action through a number of extraordinary means: putting a bench in front of your home, adding horns to your bicycle helmet, dressing your kids as dragons – using the shock factor to change the attitudes of car drivers in their so-called 'Dragon Wagons'. In an interview with* Carbusters, *Engwicht talks of his favourite taming techniques and the importance of creating carfree communities.*

Since Western society is so obsessed with getting somewhere fast, do you think it is feasible to 'tame' traffic?
Yes. We are all a bundle of contradictions. It is true we love getting somewhere fast, but we also love lounging around, listening to a great yarn or watching children play. We have this strange fixation that fast movement always equals progress and going slow is stagnation. But I think we need a better balance between our need to move and our need to feel comfortable and at home where we live. One problem is that our streets are designed primarily for moving fast and not for connecting to the social and cultural life of the street.

In your book *Mental Speed Bumps* you encourage people to take direct action, such as moving their sofas onto the pavements and cyclists wearing horns on their helmets. Do you see this happening?
Yes. Dozens of people who come to my talks go home and start trying the techniques for themselves; they tell me it was a catalyst for changing the social life of their neighbourhood. For example, one guy I met in Seattle went home and told his wife they were going to have dinner on their front lawn twice a week. Eventually, he said that not only did motorists start slowing down, they would stop their car and come over and have a chat. People have told me that in a couple of weeks, simple actions like this have helped build closer communities.

> "I love wearing a pair of red devil's horns on my bike helmet"

What is your favourite method for taming traffic?
I love wearing a pair of red devil's horns on my bike helmet – it totally humanises drivers, making them slow down and even have a conversation with me. I also enjoy sitting on my Street Reclaiming Throne which folds out of a suitcase and which I have set up in streets all over the world – once I had a spontaneous party with my chair in front the *Arc de Triomphe* in Paris!

What are the current challenges facing people who wish to reclaim streets using your methods?
I think a major challenge is to reverse the last 20 years of psychological retreat from our streets. This retreat started when parents said to their children, "Don't play in the middle of the road, play on the sidewalk instead." This became an open invitation for cars to go faster, because they no longer had to look out for children in the street. Parents responded by telling the kids to not play on the sidewalk, but to play in the front yard because the traffic was going too fast. Removing children from the sidewalk invited traffic to go even faster. Each step of this psychological retreat from the street not only eroded the quality of neighbourhood life and sense of community; it encouraged traffic to go even faster. It also left more vulnerable those who must walk or

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cycle. That is why I advocate people moving some of their existing activities closer to the street; it is easy and does not really cost any extra time.

The Walking School Bus has been one of your most popular programmes. Why do you think this is?
I think the popularity comes from it being relatively easy to implement and it doesn't take a lot to explain how it works. The basic principle of the Walking School Bus is to give kids independent mobility. It's best implemented in places where children are not walking to school or cannot safely walk to school, and it should be largely a parent-run programme. At first it was grassroots-run and I intended it to stay this way, but it has evolved and is now used by governments. This is a problem for me, as now official programmes are enveloped in red tape, so I think it has lost the original vision – which is to give kids independent mobility.

From your experience developing alternative solutions to traffic problems in cities worldwide, what is the biggest change you have seen as a result of your work?
Traffic calming has gone through many interesting phases. When I first started, 50% of traffic engineers thought I was from another planet and quite mad. I think my ideas were resisted because they went against perceived engineering wisdom. One problem is that engineers would have to engage with communities. Who wants the speed bump outside their house? Engineers were not comfortable with being out at community meetings five nights a week arguing about who would get what devices. These days I get a lot of support from engineers, and I think this change in their attitude has come about partly because I have become smarter in communicating my message. Another reason my Traffic Taming ideas are embraced is because they are fundamentally a response to traffic speed issues – this gains attention and respect, especially from traffic engineers. Getting residents to take responsibility for bringing traffic speeds down themselves, using "mental speed bumps", strikes a real chord with engineers.

You have been writing on the subject of traffic calming and street reclaiming for nearly 20 years. What would you describe as the biggest influence on your work?
I believe I view the world through a child's eyes and never stop asking why things work the way they do. So for me, it is important to simply observe how streets and public spaces work, and ask why. Also, reading what other people write on the subject helps me deepen my understanding, although my basic ideas come from observing and taking every objection as an opportunity to build a more robust understanding. Overall, my aim is to simply lift the glass ceiling of what people perceive to be possible.

What is it you observe in the streets?
I study all the design elements of the street and how they influence social, cultural and economic activity. I find it interesting to observe people in the street: where they look, how they interact with passers-by and what they tell you about the placement and shape of their actions. What I have learned is that there are no golden rules about what makes great public spaces; the secret lies in the way all the elements work together.

> **"A major challenge is to reverse the last 20 years of psychological retreat from our streets"**

Have there been objections concerning your work? And how have you responded?
People often object to my argument that intrigue slows traffic. Instead, for example, many people have argued that a car crash on a freeway is an element of intrigue, yet it causes more accidents due to people rubbernecking. But, freeways, through their design, make a promise of total predictability and when something unpredictable happens, motorists are not in the right headspace to deal with it. The problem for me is that streets are becoming more predictable. For example, there are more and more signs and traffic control devices, which put motorists in the wrong headspace to deal with these unpredictable elements. But all human behaviour is inherently unpredictable. And, I believe the streets are part of the public, social space of the city. So forming a deeper understanding of these issues has helped me to develop the concept of a "false sense of security" which forms a whole chapter in *Mental Speed Bumps*.

What advice and words of wisdom would you give to someone thinking of taming 'Dragon Wagons' for the first time?
The most important thing is to make it fun. If creating a better world is hard work and makes you grumpy, you are probably doing it the wrong way!

For more information about Engwicht's world, please visit, www.lesstraffic.com
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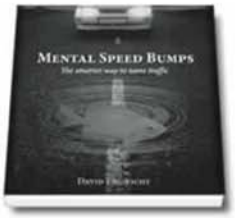

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By David Engwicht
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- David Engwicht on his Street Reclaiming Throne, Arc de Triomphe, Paris

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A Penny for your Thoughts

Interview with Joff Summerfield

By Sam Fleet

On November 9, 2008, Joff Summerfield returned to London, completing his world tour after travelling 35,447 km, over 924 days – on a penny-farthing. In support of The Born Free Foundation and Rethink Breast Cancer, Summerfield became the second man to achieve the feat, after Thomas Stevens – who became the first man to circle the globe by bicycle in 1884, when he completed his tour on his penny-farthing. Carbusters *caught up with Summerfield to ask him his thoughts on adventure, cars, Everest and the penny.*

What did you enjoy most on your return?
I had a fantastic reception when I returned. It was great to see all my family and friends again after two and a half years. And the English Pub – there's nothing like it.

Penny-farthings are beautiful bikes; what drew you to them?
It came about when I first started working for myself. I decided to start cycling again as a healthier way of getting to and from the workshop – I hadn't ridden since I was a kid – and I discovered that I loved cycling. I had an old pre-war BSA paratrooper bike, and that year I rode it to Amsterdam and had an epiphany: this was how I wanted to see the world – on a bicycle. I like making things, and I didn't want to do it on a normal bike, and the silliest thing I could think of was the penny-farthing. I went to a museum, saw how they were made and made the first one. I rode that one to Paris for the millennium celebrations, learnt a lot about them from that trip, and made another one. By now people wanted to buy them from me, so I started selling them as well, and it went from there.

Big Wheel, Big Mountain - The penny and Everest

You took your penny within sight of Everest base camp. How do they handle the climbs?
You do a fair bit of walking! The gradients aren't too bad, but you're just so high that there's no air. Everest base camp is at about 5,300 m, and just walking across the road is hard work – you're always out of breath. I came up gradually from China, so it wasn't a sudden increase, but just the altitude and the quality of the road make it difficult. You're constantly looking out for rocks and sandy patches, which are deadly on a penny. But, it was fantastic getting there. To be riding a penny around Everest was just fantastically ridiculous.

What was your most memorable moment?
It's hard to think of one. The whole of Tibet and the Himalayas were probably my favourite areas, just because it was so hard travelling there, to be up so high and in the middle of nowhere. It's not like, "I'm fed up with this, I'll get on a train", because there is no train. There isn't anything. Which is great, because it's real gritty adventure. Also the fact that I wasn't supposed to be there and had to jump the border: as I didn't have the right kind of paperwork. Tibet's such a fantastic country: the scenery, the mountains, the people – it's like stepping back in time 500 years.

You're the second person to do this journey on a penny-farthing, after Thomas Stevens. Did you ever follow in his tracks?
Not deliberately. I didn't try to follow his route, because you can't re-enact his journey. Even if you're on the same road going up the same valley, which I was a few times on the silk route, I was on tarmac and he was on dirt. Although in some bits through China and Tibet I could get a feel for what it must've been like for him. But, the more I went on, the more I appreciated what he actually achieved. I've had e-mail most of the time, and modern medicines, and he had none of that. He's the real hero.

> **"Riding a penny around Everest was just fantastically ridiculous"**

Interestingly, he didn't seem to carry very much equipment. The difference being that in his time everyone travelled by horse, camel or on foot, especially through Asia. There were *caravanserais*, where mule trains would stop every day. So there were stops within a day's ride – which he could do, so he didn't need to carry a tent. Now, because everyone's in cars, all those guesthouses and *caravanserais* have disappeared. You have to camp more today than you did then.

What kept you going through hard times?
Just the fact that you're out there. There are days when it's cold and wet and you're frozen, and you talk to a local who'll have nothing. But, they'll be so welcoming and bring you into their house and sit you in front of the stove. And that's all you need: to be warm again. They understand that you're travelling,

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and there's this universal understanding of basic needs. Moments like that; the simplest things; but the most valuable gift they can give you.

Do you think people react differently to travellers when they travel by bike?
Definitely. In many countries poor people use bicycles. If you come past in a jeep you're viewed as a rich westerner. If you come past on a bicycle you're viewed as the same as them – a normal person. People are friendlier and more welcoming, and because you stop in the areas where in a jeep or a bus you wouldn't usually stop, you're often the first foreigner they've met, which sparks an interest immediately.

Any strange reactions to the penny?
Yes, but 99% of the time it's a positive thing. People howl with laughter. With me sitting on top of the penny with a pith helmet – it looks pretty funny. Smiles and laughter. I've seen more open jaws in the last two and a half years than in my whole life. Which is a positive thing. If I made someone happy that day, it's great.

Would you do it again?
I've got plans for future trips, but I need to catch my breath first, write the book, make some bikes and pay the debts before I can do anything else. Hopefully the book will pay for the next trip. There're still a lot of places to see in the world, and a lot of places I'd like to go back to.

What motivates you to go out and travel?
Adventure. Seeing the world and not being stationary. Just out there. There's so much. We're all lucky if we're physically fit and healthy and should make the most of it. It gives you a broader sense of the world, and helps you understand things. It helps you form your own opinion on world issues.

You used to work on classic cars for a living; what are your thoughts generally on cars and their future?
Well, there's certainly too many of them in England. Since I've been back in London I can't believe how many more cyclists there are, which is fantastic. And yes, there are a lot more things that could be done, but it's difficult because cars are there; they're not going to go away – that's the way I see it. I do like vintage cars, and I was involved in motor racing for a long time. My interest in cycling is a balance to that, and I think any solution has to be a balance. I come from the engineering point of view: cars are very complex, beautiful pieces of engineering; but they do pollute and they're killing the planet. It's a difficult question.

Any lessons learnt?
We've all had things that have pissed us off, and looking back, usually they are trifles. Perspective.

For more information, please visit,
www.pennyfarthingworldtour.com
www.bornfree.org.uk
www.rethinkbreastcancer.com

A Punto Pedal

Hope Rides in Peru

By Luis Cueva, Theo Haris and María Valenzuela

The Ecuadorian team *Intiñan-94* started from Lima, Peru last November for a bike tour across the country, carrying with it hope but also great symbolism: they would cross 1,500 km on a tandem bike with the name *Tiflo-BiVi-Teca* (Tiflo=blind, Bi=bike, Vi=vida, life, Teca=bibliotheca) in order to donate 20,000 digital and audio books for elderly, blind and disabled people in Peru. The riders equally symbolic: librarians María Inés Valenzuela and Luis Eduardo Cueva symbolise two underrepresented portions of Latin American society: women and blind people.

The ride took place within the framework of the 3rd workshop *Ciclo Vías Unidas de Las Américas* (Joined American Bikelines); it was organised by Cicloaxion Peru under the title *A Punto Pedal* (Ready to Ride). The ride's objectives manifold: to provide access to information, education, culture and entertainment to disabled and elderly people in Latin America; to promote the use of cycles as a clean mode of transport, but also as a sport for disabled people to improve health and self-esteem; and to promote eco-tourism. The overall aim was to increase awareness for the environment and to encourage disabled and elderly people to keep on living with vitality and dignity.

The team arrived in Lima in late November with the help of Octavio Zegarra and Nilton López, members of Cicloaxion Peru. From there the tandem riders took off. The way was very difficult, since they faced frequent sand storms, hard winds and very steep slopes. The hot temperatures and the never-ending asphalt made the trek harder. However, the beautiful Peruvian nature and the warmth of the locals – together with their delicious gastronomy – strengthened the tandem team. After 1,500 km, they finally reached their destination, Máncora y Túmbes.

The team *Intiñan-94* (from a Quechuan word meaning "Route of the Sun") had fulfilled its goal, despite its collective 94 years of age and the fact that one of the two is blind. Realising an altruistic and brave project, they provided a wonderful example for the rest of us to follow: that, in the words of Luis Cueva, "in order to face the challenges of life, you need a positive attitude, will and persistence."

Now, the team is preparing to stand by this message once more and is already organising *A Punto Pedal* - South Cone (Chile, Argentina and Uruguay) for March 2009.

For more information, please visit,
www.apuntopedal.com and
www.cicloaxion.org

- María Inés Valenzuela and Luis Eduardo Cueva

Luis Cueva lost his eyesight in July, 2007, after an explosion in the military gunpowder storage facility where he was working. He then dedicated his life to promoting the well-being of people with sight difficulties. He studied Braille and Psychology at the Braille Institute in Los Angeles, California and volunteered in the Congress Library, where he learnt more about books for the blind. Afterwards he returned to Ecuador to promote the rights of blind people all over Latin America.

His work is not limited to that: he also published a book called *Heroes Obsoletos*, in which he provides a detailed narrative of his experiences as a soldier during the armed conflicts between Ecuador and Peru, arguing that war is not the way to solve any problem. In his words, "Only by living these hard experiences can a person understand that our lives can't be only for destruction; so when I get the opportunity to compensate for all the damage that I have made as a soldier of that terrible war, I do it". *A Punto Pedal* was and is for Luis Cueva an opportunity to amend the past in the only way possible: by building a better future.

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Obama's Era and His Plans for the US Transportation System

By Susan Vaughan

People the world over erupted with joy on January 20, when US president Barack Hussein Obama took the oath of office. At the San Francisco, California Civic Center, thousands gathered to watch his swearing in on a turbo screen and cheered "O-ba-MA! O-ba-MA!" Nearby at a makeshift carnival booth, they threw old shoes at a likeness of George W. Bush. Nonetheless, most people are mindful that Obama is stepping into a thicket of difficulties – including planet-wide environmental degradation created in part by American driving habits.

"If the new administration doesn't consider transportation for its climate and its energy impacts, then…ultimately we'll have dire economic consequences," said Randy Neufeld of the Chicago-based Active Transportation Alliance and president of the lobbying group America Bikes. The key, he said, is moving more federal funding into metropolitan areas for bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements. Right now, no one knows whether the Obama administration and the new Congress will do this, but environmentalists are studying the signs.

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Change?

Within a week of his inauguration, Obama reversed a Bush administration executive order forbidding states – especially the state of California, which had passed a law to get it into compliance with the Kyoto Protocol – from regulating auto emissions. He is also permitting federal agencies to raise fuel efficiency standards.

But Obama's big test will come with the US$825 billion stimulus package that should be ready for him to sign by mid-February. This package, the largest in American history, is intended to lift the national economy out of its malaise.

Sustainable transportation organisers have their own ideas for that bill – and for a transportation bill that may be voted on in the fall – but right now, they are struggling to get Congress to restore funding for local and regional mass transit agencies, funding that had been cut by late January to make way for tax cuts.

San Francisco's Municipal Transportation Agency alone, which records about 700,000 daily trips, is projected to be short US$90 million out of an annual budget of US$787 million this year. Transportation for America, a mass-transit lobbying group, is organising now to get money restored for transit agencies.

Signs of Hope

Nonetheless, many environmentalists are optimistic. During the campaign, said Jeffrey Miller, president of the Washington, DC-based Thunderhead Alliance for Biking and Walking, Obama talked about Safe Routes to School, the federal programme geared at increasing the number of children walking or bicycling to school. "He gets it and supports it," said Miller.

Obama also pledged to have Americans getting 10% of their energy from renewable sources by the end of his first term, and to achieve a 15% reduction in electricity demand by the end of the next decade. In addition, he took Amtrak from Philadelphia to Washington, DC for his inauguration.

Balancing Change with Business as Usual

However, just as Obama was declaring victory in November, American auto company executives were lining up at the congressional trough, begging for handouts to keep their struggling industries in operation. Congress gave them nothing, but they did get a US$13.4 billion bailout from Bush, with another US$4 billion to come in February if needed. This lifeline has given Obama time to create a plan around the auto industry. But what kind of plan will he create?

Obama, a Democrat, has chosen former Republican Illinois Congressman Ray LaHood to be transportation secretary. He has also chosen Tom Vilsack, the former governor of Iowa, to be agriculture secretary, and Steven Chu, the former head of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, to be his energy secretary. Through these appointments, Obama may be indicating his support for ethanol, a plant-based alternative to petroleum: Iowa and Illinois are two big growers of corn for ethanol, and Chu has voiced support for cellulosic ethanol.

But, for many sustainable living advocates, ethanol can enrich agribusinesses, yet it is unlikely to give Americans the "energy return on energy invested" that they are used to from oil, natural gas and coal, especially without seriously impacting soil health and world food supplies. Ethanol "doesn't really address the core energy issue in terms of using less," said Neufeld. "I think conservation is where it's at."

Wish Lists

In the interests of conservation, sustainable transportation activists have wish lists. "I would like an incremental downsizing of the highway system, and an upsizing of the rail system," said San Francisco State geography professor and bicycle activist Jason Henderson.

Henderson would like Obama to give "fireside chats" like those given by president Franklin Delano Roosevelt. "Americans could save energy," said Henderson, "if Obama told Americans, 'We gotta slow down.' Otherwise we're going to go medieval. Al Gore told us we had 10 years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

As to the transportation bill that should now be in the works in Congress, said Caron Whitaker, campaign director for America Bikes, "We need…to build a green infrastructure and active public transportation systems." Such a system would ensure networks for bicycle and walking in every community, and safe routes to transit stops, schools, and shopping centres for everyone from school-age children to seniors.

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wanna cut your car use?

..just call anna

Last issue Jean McDougall wrote to ask* Carbusters *to offer content for drivers who have no choice but to go by car. I recommend hypermiling – i.e. maximising fuel efficiency. This helps drivers to cut fuel costs and be safer. Plus it aids society and the planet by minimising waste and pollution.

Begin by planning routes in advance. Go in the smallest, lightest vehicle available. Avoid idling and set off immediately.

A fundamental is to drive gently – don't go heavy on the brakes all the time and don't floor the accelerator. Generally hypermilers go at the speed limit. Jack Martin who won this year's "Tour to the Shore" contest in New Jersey got 124.6 miles per gallon (1.89l/100km) from a Honda Insight. He said, in a *New Scientist* article this October, "When a vehicle goes by, you feel it initially suck on you a little bit and then push you. If you're sensitive to that, you can work it… it's nonsensical to try to be too slow because then you're just fighting that wall of air as it goes past you". So, look ahead. Don't multitask but keep your concentration on anticipating conditions and stopping in time.

Keep excess weight down – for instance don't fill up the tank more than is needed and remove roof racks, trailers or whatever is unnecessarily in the boot. If you need to use a roof rack, try an aerodynamic box type. An empty roof rack adds 10% or more to fuel bills.

Try air vents before opening windows, windows before sunroofs. Turn off air conditioning, which uses an average 15% more fuel. Automatic transmission adds 10%-15% to fuel bills.

For a car to breathe, Martin says, "tyres must be inflated to their maximum rated pressure" and "car filters be clean". A 7 psi under-inflation wastes half a gallon (1.89 litres) per tank. Regular servicing improves tuning. Park in the shade to cut fuel loss due to evaporation.

Martin advises that the best way to raise fuel efficiency is with a feedback system. A scan gauge that costs about US$130 says how many miles you get to the gallon. "If your foot taps a little too hard you can see miles per gallon drop". Most hypermilers drive barefoot to feel the resistance on the accelerator. By watching the resistance and the mpg on the scan, it's possible to work out what behaviours improve mileage. For instance, roads have little valleys and ridges formed by many tyres. Ride the ridges to get better mileage, especially if it's been raining and the valleys have puddles.

Averaging 50 miles per gallon (4.7l/100km) could cut oil usage in half on US highways.

Dear Anna,
I hoped that you might be able to provide information about economic benefits to local businesses or those along the streets that are closed to traffic.
Beth Mort

Dear Beth,
The Living Streets Conference 2005 was called *The Walking Pound*. Yes - pedestrians do bring money into local shopping centres.

The basic equation is:
better walking environment = good for local businesses = stronger communities

Not only do people who walk to the shops spend more, but overall, the nicer the environment, the more people spend.

A recent study in Aberdeen of Union Street Pedestrianisation (a current project) found projections of direct benefits of 410 new fte (full time equivalent) jobs (mainly retail and hospitality) and £22 million increased turnover to city centre businesses.

The City of Toronto report *Economic Benefits of Pedestrianisation Toronto 1999* found "pedestrian-orientated retail streets can provide significant environmental improvements and increases local retail sales."

There is a theory that car traffic is good for retail. However, in Leicester, UK, the greater the level of car traffic, the greater the number of vacant shops.

Pedestrian traffic tends to increase dramatically after a pedestrian friendly area is created. Shoppers are drawn by the pleasant shopping experience, safety, improved air quality and low noise levels. Greater pedestrian traffic usually leads to increased sales. Worldwide, far more pedestrianisation schemes have had a positive effect on retail turnover (49%) than a negative one (2%); other projects have had a neutral effect.

In Toronto, the underground PATH network is very popular among local workers. Buildings connected to the PATH charge twice the annual rent per square foot and have lower vacancy rates than comparable buildings that are not on the PATH. Around the world, cities where people mostly walk, cycle or use public transit have greater wealth (gross regional product per capita) than cities with heavy car use.

Newman (1998) attributed the negative impact of heavy car use on city wealth to: (1) greater road expenditure, (2) greater percentage of wealth spent on commuting, (3) reduced transit cost recovery, (4) increased transportation deaths, and (5) increased pollution from vehicle emissions.

Anna Semlyen
Author of *Cutting Your Car Use* (**www.cuttingyourcaruse.co.uk**) Sales at over 100,000. If you would like to write a version for your country contact John Elford at Green Books (**john@greenbooks.co.uk**). Please send your questions with subject title "Ask Anna" to **editors@carbusters.org**

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Blogging Brilliance

Carfree Living the Virtual Way

Blogs are changing the world – and carfree ones for the best. Gaining ground against the 'conventional' (and mostly car-fed) media, blogs are the way forward in this new era that demands direct, unprejudiced and full information flow. Carbusters *asked four carfree bloggers to share their views about the importance of blogging for the carfree movement and also to present their own blogs for our readers. What better inspiration can we provide to get more people to enter cyberspace – carfree.*

A New Weapon in the Battle against Car Dependence

By Joshua Hart

Starting a blog can be a great way to express your opinions, share resources and reach a wide audience at no cost whatsoever. Blogging has the potential to challenge the power of the mainstream media with their pro-fossil fuel, pro-motoring bias, and allow people to realise that we are not alone in seeing the limitless expansion of motoring for the insanity it really is.

I started blogging in 2006, when I decided to give up flying and take a train and freighter ship from San Francisco to my new home in Bristol, UK. I blogged every day during my journey and published these journal entries and photos on my blog **onthelevelblog.com** when I arrived in England. They proved popular and led to widespread coverage on the local BBC news and other media outlets, an example of how blogs are increasingly defining the content of mainstream media.

Since I've been living in Bristol there has been somewhat of a revolution in transport activism, with bloggers at the heart of it all. Partly because the city is so car-dependent, and partly because of Bristol's thriving counterculture, blogs which are critical of prevailing pro-car policies have been sprouting up like mushrooms after a spring rain. Several local scandals have broken to the wider public on local blogs, and the Bristol City Council is realising that there is a large and growing voice for sustainable transport and open government. Why not start your own blog today and join the growing carfree blogging community?

Blogging About the Carfree Lifestyle

By Christa Clark-Jones

Blogging is an effective tool for recruiting potential carfree enthusiasts and creating the coolness factor for the carfree lifestyle.

On par with health, beauty and longevity, walkers and cyclists are welcome to the urban fabric. Their unique perspective, identity and self-esteem are usually amplified. And while health and beauty take time to develop, the coolness factor can make an instant difference between a quitter and a convert.

The CopenhagenCycleChic **www.copenhagencyclechic.com** and Copenhagenize **www.copenhagenize.com** blogs are excellent examples. The mixture of fashion and bicycle advocacy makes the impossible look fashionable. Cycling in the rain or snow, and while in a dress and high heels, looks great. Transporting bulky goods on a tricycle looks easy and fun. This illustrates the possibility of cycling for sophistication and resilience. And the Copenhagen-based blogs, most importantly, have a global audience, attracting thousands of hits per day. With increasing global visitors, carfree organisations and businesses linked to the blogs are rewarded too.

I have created **www.CarFreeLifestyle.com**, a user-generated website for carfree enthusiasts. All of the submissions are original works by the CarFreeLifestyle community. It is a hotspot for carfree advice and motivation. While going carfree or car-lite can seem impossible, this website encourages baby steps. Perhaps it will inspire some people to try being carfree for a day or weekend. Most importantly, why not make the transition to a carfree lifestyle fun?

A Cyber 'Carfree City'

By Jonas Christian

The city I live in, Berlin, is a great city for carfree living. Almost half of all households do not own a car, bicycles are everywhere, and public transport is efficient. Sadly, traffic planning is in many ways still stuck in the 1960s: cross-city *Autobahns* and free parking are hip. Drivers sport expensive cars and a righteous sense of entitlement.

Frustrated with this, I started the blog **autofreie-stadt.de** ('carfree city') last year. I write in German about current events, technology and city planning from a carfree perspective. Building an audience is a slow but rewarding process and positive feedback is starting to trickle in.

Carfree blogs are a great way of exposing people to the carfree perspective and providing a virtual meeting point of like-minded individuals. The demand certainly exists: when a carfree district was planned in Berlin (**www.autofrei-wohnen.de**), thousands signed up for an apartment within weeks. Sadly, this particular project was later stopped by an overzealous bureaucrat.

However, there's a limited number of people you can reach through blogging. One of my aims with the blog is therefore to build up enough expertise to be able to place articles in other media outlets. Having a blog as a public repository of articles goes a long way towards improving your knowledge and writing ability.

Compared to other countries, living carfree is no extraordinary feat in most German cities. The public transport and bicycling infrastructure is in good shape and many households live carfree without feeling restricted. The next logical step would be to establish carfree districts in order to protect non-drivers from drivers. Sadly, while the need to protect non-smokers is well established, the necessity of protecting non-drivers has yet to arrive in the mainstream. My blog is my small contribution towards this goal.

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Book Review

By Chris Coleman

Carfree Law, Politics and Farms

By Susan Vaughan

Car-Free Talk **carfreetalk.blogspot.com** is dedicated to the exploration of the carfree (or car-lite) existence, and train, bus and bicycle travel. I am based in San Francisco, California but travel throughout the United States and elsewhere, documenting transportation systems and movements toward more sustainable living. The blog also examines transportation policy and traffic engineering as they relate to maintaining and expanding public transportation, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. In addition, I endeavour to explore modern-day and past farm life in the likelihood that in the future, people will need to relearn farming skills, as our current energy-intensive lifestyle becomes less and less sustainable.

The blog is also a place to explore the intersection of the law, the US Constitution and policy as they relate to creating sustainable, democratic communities. In particular, we are studying possible abuses of power under the administration of former US president George W. Bush and the connection between those abuses and the furtherance of an agenda inimical to the creation of sustainable, democratic communities.

Some carfree blogs in the USA:

carfreeusa.blogspot.com/ Promoting the joys of carfree life in the USA.

carfreefamily.blogspot.com/ A family takes on carfree living in Santa Fe, New Mexico

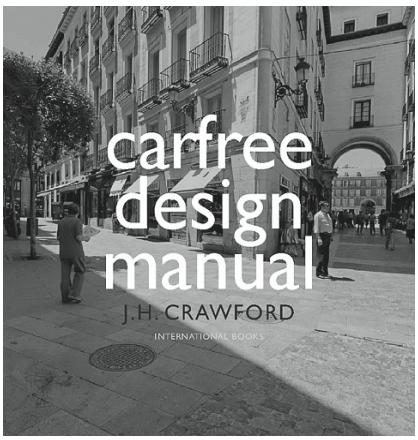
carfreefamily.wordpress.com/ Family carfree adventures in Minneapolis, Minnesota

carfreeinbigd.blogspot.com/ Experiences of carfree living in Dallas, Texas

commuter.typepad.com/the_carfree_diet/ Carfree diet in Arlington, Virginia

carfreedays.com/ Living with xtracycles in Seattle, Washington.

Visit the *Carbusters* Facebook fan page for RSS feeds of carfree blogs! Also, we're in the process of launching a 'Carfree Blogosphere': all bloggers out there who want to be part of networking within carfree blogs, send an email to info@worldcarfree.net



Carfree Design Manual
By J. H. Crawford
International Books, 2009, 600pp
ISBN 9789057270604

Say your nation's chief came to you pleading for advice on how to make his or her cities carfree: where would you turn? If you wished to take the drafts out of the hands of the technocrats to allow the future residents to fiddle with a human-scaled, community-focused carfree design, then look no further than J.H. Crawford's new book *Carfree Design Manual*. Its 600 pages make the carfree design concept a process accessible to anyone with interest. Crawford starts with a dissection of modernism and explains how it gets urban design all wrong, then, after laying strong philosophical foundations, proposes concrete, innovative ideas on a variety of things, from how to move freight on a metropolitan scale while maintaining an 'urban village' ambience, to the key role that a revived concierge service could play, and to how neighbourhoods could be designed collectively.

"Crawford defends design that is an expression of local geography, culture and materials"

Modernism during the 20th century completely overturned the values and culture of the western world, cultivating ideal conditions for entrepreneurs who could profit quickly by rejecting traditional architecture in exchange for the cheapest constructions possible. Architecture and urban design shifted from a practical craft to an "art" that expressed "concepts". This Cartesian faith in rationality over intuition can be especially seen in the grid-patterned streets of American cities. Though useful in exerting "military necessity, capitalist expediency and religious symbolism", the grid can never match the intimacy of old European meandering streets that intuitively lead to the squares or key monumental buildings. Crawford, on the other hand, defends design that is an expression of local geography, culture and materials; not a cold analysis made behind closed doors.

We may think of the medieval times as an era of superstition and intolerance, but Crawford, Lewis Mumford and many other carfree visionaries acknowledge that this was a golden age for urban design – offering a return to smaller-scaled street design and the aesthetic of beauty. Crawford's theory is simple: shorten block-lengths, narrow the streets, reduce the height of buildings, and a human-scale is created that is conducive to building strong communities, local commerce and self-propelled transport. Crawford favours less the mild New Urbanism (what he calls old suburbanism) and more the merging of old, intuitive urban design with modern technology and democratic principles.

When it comes to transport, Crawford has no shortage of ideas and is most innovative when it comes to freight. Below-grade rail – as an extension of passenger metro usage – could deliver goods directly to the rear of storage facilities on its route, with smaller shipments left at district depots. Freight trams, now used in Dresden, could expand the network. For loads under 200 kg freight bikes can be used, as in Copenhagen. To unify this system, he envisions the return of the concierge service – one on every block – to serve and maintain, for example, a utility storage area for bikes and heavy carts, a place to temporarily leave odds and ends and a hearth for the community – complete with a wood stove.

The carfree movement is lucky to have the dedication of someone who is able to tread the fine line between letting one's imagination of urban possibilities run unleashed, while not losing sight of reality. The idea of building carfree cities may seem far-fetched to us now, but if circumstances allow for governments to give a portion towards our cause of what was recently handed out to bankrupt banks, the sky is the limit. The EU commissioner for environment Stavros Dimas wrote the introduction to this book, giving credence to Crawford's soundly reasoned and researched ideas. Hopefully we can take up Crawford's challenge and actually use this book as a manual.

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Non-fiction

Carfree Cities
J.H. Crawford, 2000, 324 pages
US$35, EUR 24, £18, or CZK 620
An unapologetic argument for carfree cities combined with a detailed and well thought-out plan, Carfree Cities outlines a city structure carefully designed to minimise environmental impact and maximise quality of life.

Carfree Design Manual
J.H. Crawford, 2008, 600 pages
Hardcover, colour images throughout
US$45, EUR 35, £32, or CZK 950
Carfree Design Manual starts from the urban planning principles established in Carfree Cities and shows how to design beautiful carfree districts that are places to build a satisfying and sustainable life.

Car Sick
Lynn Sloman, 2006, 192 pages
US$29, EUR 20, £15, or CZK 520
"Cars cause environmental destruction, provoke stress and tear the heart out of communities. Car Sick provides a page-turning account of how we got into this mess, and more importantly, charts an attractive way out." - T. Juniper, Friends of the Earth

Cutting Your Car Use (UK Version)
Save Money, Be Healthy, Be Green!
Anna Semlyen, 2007, 96 pages
US$12, EUR 8, £6, or CZK 210
Britain's first ever personal traffic reduction guide. Packed with easy-to-follow, best practice advice. For anyone who wants to cut their car use, or give up the car completely. New updated colour edition.

Divorce Your Car!
Ending the Love Affair With the Automobile
Katie Alvord, 2000, 320 pages
US$20, EUR 14, £10, or CZK 360
Divorce Your Car! speaks to individuals, encouraging readers to change their own driving behaviour without waiting for broader social change, stressing that individual action can drive social change.

Earth First! Direct Action Manual
DAM Collective, 1998, 152 pages
US$10, EUR 7, £5, or CZK 180

End of the Road
Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1991, 300 pages
US$10, EUR 7, £5, or CZK 180
There are half a billion cars on the planet, and this book takes a long, hard look at the contrast between the image and the reality of this fact. Zuckermann offers 33 "ways out" of our car dependence, including pedestrianisation, alternative transport, restructuring public transport...

Life Between Buildings
Jan Gehl, 2001, 202 pages
US$40, EUR 27, £20, or CZK 720
First published in 1971, this book is still the best source for understanding how people use urban public spaces. Life Between Buildings is the undisputed introduction to the interplay between design and social life.

Public Spaces - Public Life
Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe, 1996, 96 pages
US$49, EUR 33, £25, or CZK 870
Describes the remarkable improvements in Copenhagen over the past 34 years, and how they were accomplished.

Sustainable Mobility Guide for Municipalities
Justin Hyatt, 2006, 52 pages
US$10, EUR 7, £5, or CZK 180
The Sustainable Mobility Guide provides a full spectrum of themes related to transportation, urban design, mobility management and more. It is aimed at decision makers as well as NGO's working in the field of transport and urban planning, or anyone else interested in a broad survey of urban mobility issues. Also contains a section highlighting relevant websites and organisations.

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Payments: Car Busters, Krátká 26, 100 00 Prague 10, Czech Rep.

Should you prefer to pay by bank transfer, please contact us.

Fiction/Kids

The Age of the Bicycle
Miriam Webster, 1998, 270 pages
US$15, EUR 10, £8, or CZK 270
"What if one afternoon all the cars in the world slowed down and then stopped in their tracks... soon tea shops burgeoned on the interstates... rush-hour traffic went by on bicycles at an average speed of eight miles an hour..."

Alice in Underland
Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1999
US$10, EUR 7, £5, or CZK 180
A curious mixture of nonsense, social satire and surrealist fairytale, which takes the classical Alice through the dreary landscape of suburban America.

Family Mouse Behind the Wheel
Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1992, 30 pages, hardcover
US$10, EUR 7, £5, or CZK 180
Colourful illustrated book that teaches children the problems of car culture through the eyes of a family of mice who decide to buy a car, with all the consequences...

The Little Driver [Special Offer!]
Martin Wagner, 2003, 56 pages
US$7, EUR 4.5, £3.5, or CZK 105
A children's book for young and old, The Little Driver takes a fresh look at our obsession with cars through the eyes of a boy still young enough to take nothing for granted.

Carbusters Press

Bulk Discount: Ten or more *CARtoons* and/or *Roadkill Bill* books, any combination, for half price.

CARtoons
Andy Singer, 2001, 100 pages, optional CD-ROM contains high-resolution TIF images of all graphics
Book: US$10, EUR 7, £5, or CZK 180
CD-ROM: US$5, EUR 3.50, £2.50, or CZK 90
A personal and provocative look at our relationship with the car, from Ford's first assembly lines to today's "drive-through" society. Features seven pithy chapter texts and a compilation of hard-hitting quotations, plus 90 of Singer's infamous graphics.

Roadkill Bill [Special Offer!]
Ken Avidor, 2001, 108 pages
US$7, EUR 4.5, £3.5, or CZK 105
It's the comic strip that looks at cars, technology and philosophy from the viewpoint of a frequently squashed rodent. In Roadkill Bill, the wonderful, provocative, amusing and sometimes gruesome cartoons are collected together for the first and only time. Avidor gives voice to the suffering soul of humanity that feels bulldozed and paved over by industrial technology run amok.

karikAUTury, GÉPregény, karikAUTúry, and AUTOkomiks

CARtoons has been published in Czech, Slovak, Hungarian and Polish. The books are part of the Visegrad Resource Centre project. If you are interested in copies contact **info@worldcarfree.net**

DVD

Caravan/Prague
2007, 76 min., DVD, US$20, EUR 13, CZK 320
A bicycle caravan travels across Europe to shut down the annual meeting of the IMF and the World Bank. It will function without money, without leaders, and without permission from any authority. The police have other ideas… Included is the short film Quebec: At the Wall.

Source*
2005, 77 min., DVD, region-free PAL (plays on all PCs) - US$25, EUR 17, £13, or CZK 450
The tale of the Baku-Ceyhan-Tbilisi pipeline is a tale of corruption, greed and Western money flowing into the oil-soaked shores of the Caspian Sea. This documentary takes you to the source.

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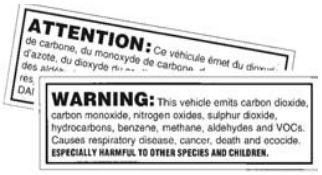
Still We Ride!
In Tandem Productions, 2005, 37 min., DVD
US$20, EUR 14, £10, or CZK 360
This action-packed documentary is a glimpse into the shocking showdown between the monthly Critical Mass bike ride and New York City police in the months after the Republican National Convention in August 2004.

Stickers

"One Less Car" Bike Stickers
Ten stickers: US$4.5, EUR 3, £2, or CZK 70
Available in Catalan, Chinese, Czech, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian/Swedish/Danish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Turkish and Welsh. Sized for bike frames, water-resistant.

Stop-Sign Improvement
One: US$1.25, EUR 0.85, £0.65, or CZK 22
Ten: US$9, EUR 6.25, £4.65, or CZK 165
Forty-six centimetres long. Bright red. These big glossy vinyl stickers are just the right size to go under the word "STOP" on stop signs.


ATTENTION: Ce véhicule émet du
de carbone, du monoxyde de carbone
d'azote, du dioxyde
WARNING: This vehicle emits carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, hydrocarbons, benzene, methane, aldehydes and VOCs. Causes respiratory disease, cancer, death and ecocide.
ESPECIALLY HARMFUL TO OTHER SPECIES AND CHILDREN.

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White T-shirt with the "cars-forbidden" traffic sign on it. Unisex and woman style, in sizes M, L, XL.

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"Carfree" in white ink on black or light blue shirt; in black ink on red shirt. "Skull" in white ink on black shirt; in black ink on red shirt; unisex: S, M, L, XL; woman style: S, M, L

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